

The Sketch



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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 1896.

SIXPENCE.
By Post, 6½d.



MR. FORBES-ROBERTSON AS CONSTANTINE BRANCOMIR IN "FOR THE CROWN,"
AT THE LYCEUM THEATRE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. W. AND D. DOWNEY, EBURY STREET, S.W.

AT RANDOM.

BY L. F. AUSTIN.

"We'll c'en to 't like French falconers, fly at anything we see."

I have read with some wonder an attack in *Punch* on Mr. Stephen Crane. The critic regards "The Red Badge of Courage" as a grossly overpraised book; and he lays down certain canons of criticism which it appears to have offended. One of these is that a writer of fiction cannot truthfully depict incidents of battle in which he has taken no actual part. Mr. Crane has presumed to describe some fighting in the American Civil War; but he is a young man of twenty-four; therefore, says the *Punch* critic, triumphantly, he cannot know what he has written about. This is a summary, drum-head sort of judgment, which might be applied to more notable persons than Mr. Crane. There is a great deal of soldiering in "La Débâcle"; we are all aware that Zola was not at Sedan; how can he know anything about the catastrophe to the French arms and the military dispositions which preceded it? How does he divine the feelings of men who fought in the ranks, and a multitude of other things which he describes so minutely, and, by the admission of experts, so accurately? Well, Zola, I presume, took the precaution of consulting many people who were actors in these scenes; and as Mr. Crane has been brought up in the country which is still saturated with memories of the Civil War, and among people to whom it was the most tremendous business of their lives, and as he has the faculty of vision which makes the born artist, where is the wonder that he should see war a good deal more clearly than I do, or even than the gentleman who lays down the law in *Punch*?

To me "The Red Badge of Courage," despite some crudities of composition which are visible to all of us who write at ease, is one of the most vivid pieces of dramatic realism with which I am acquainted. This is not merely the idea of the imaginative civilian. I find Sir Evelyn Wood's name in the *Punch* article; and it so happens that this distinguished soldier, as I have reason to know, regards Mr. Crane's book as a most truthful portraiture of the realities of warfare. Here we come to another of the offended canons. The book relates mainly to the sensations of a young recruit who goes into action for the first time. He is horribly frightened, and he runs; then he is ashamed, and returns to his companions; a new-born courage burns hotly in him, and he fights till a lieutenant, who is full of strange oaths, remarks that, with ten thousand wild cats of the same type, he would finish up the war in a week. But the *Punch* critic will have none of it. Give him heroes, not this "sickly hysterical fool," who is analysing his feelings when he ought to be loading his gun. The recruit must be a son of carnage, who blazes away at the foe, and wades to the middle in gore, without a tremor, and without any of your trumpery psychology, if he is to please this censor. I thought it was pretty well known that some of the bravest soldiers have not always felt, in their first battle, like Hector and Achilles rolled into one; but if the *Punch* gentleman, whom I can imagine sitting down to his article in a helmet, prefers the romantic tradition that recruits are as bloody, bold, and resolute as veterans, he is quite welcome to it; only it does not happen to serve him as a criticism of Mr. Crane.

While I am on the subject of blood, I should like to pay a tribute to the heroine of Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's fine story, "A Lady of Quality." Clorinda begins life as a spitfire; then she becomes a minx; and, being persecuted by the partner of her minx-like pastimes, when she is about to make a brilliant marriage, she disposes of him by a well-directed blow on the head with a loaded whip. This takes place in one of her private apartments; so she first stows the body under a divan, and then carries it at night to a convenient vault, where it remains in undisturbed seclusion. There is no hue-and-cry; nobody knows the crime except a sister of the heroine, who marries the man she loves, and leads an exemplary life in perfect contentment. The sister suffers, for she was rather fond of the scamp who gets that decisive crack on the scone; but the hand that dealt it never loses nerve. Indeed, the lady has the satisfaction of learning that, by killing her early lover, she prevented him from undoing a virtuous maiden. The nearest approach I can remember to this striking motive in fiction is a story which, for some reason, Mr. Frank Harris did not reprint in his volume which contains Elder Conklin. A man commits arson to swindle an insurance company. He hears that a girl has somehow been left in the burning building, rushes back and saves her at the risk of his life, is regarded as a hero by his fellow-townsmen, and makes his crime the foundation of a new fortune.

Mrs. Burnett's idea is original and powerful, though I am not sure that it is carried far enough. Clorinda is guiltless of any deliberate intent to murder; but she is quick to take advantage of the act, and

feels no remorse. The man had deserted her after the sin of her youth; moreover, he was meditating even greater turpitude at the cost of another woman. Decidedly, the world was the better for his taking-off; and I should have thought none the worse of Clorinda had she permitted herself to reflect on the possible effect of a blow with a loaded whip wielded by an extremely muscular young woman. Mrs. Burnett has stopped short of this climax, though, in a woman of Clorinda's stormy nature, the idea of this one means of escape would surely have preceded her murderous fury, and not followed it. No doubt, some readers will be shocked to find that murder does not "out," nor bring ghosts on the track of the offender. Would they have been more shocked had Clorinda deliberately struck this blow for freedom?

This question might be put to the ladies who have been stirred by a curious incident in America. A girl, who belonged to one of the "first families," found some negro boys robbing her father's orchard. She warned them to desist, and, when they refused, she fired a pistol, and shot one of them dead. I don't know whether young ladies of the "first families" in some parts of America habitually carry fire-arms; anyway, this one was as ready with her shooting-iron as any of Bret Harte's outlaws. Tried for murder, she explained that she had intended to frighten the boy, and not to kill him; and the court inflicted a trivial penalty. There was no jury, but the case was re-tried in a spirited newspaper by twelve representative American women, seven of whom expressed the deepest sympathy with the young Amazon, on the ground that to a member of one of the "first families" such a position was an undeserved affliction. Apparently, these seven judicial minds could not sufficiently deplore the conduct of the negro boy—what does it matter whether there be a negro boy more or less?—who had so inconsiderately brought a lady of great social distinction into such a strait.

Well, Mrs. Fawcett, who dreads a slur on the great cause of women's suffrage, points out that in England we do not appreciate the prejudice of American society against the coloured person. That may be, though how the fact sheds any lustre on the seven judicial ladies does not appear; but if the Amazon was careless with her pistol because the boy was black and not white, why does Mrs. Fawcett assure us that "the girl's levity met with an awful punishment from a tribunal more august than any human court of justice"? This is a new idea, I fancy, to the illustrious seven and their interesting heroine. As that lady has received the condolences of the "first families," I suspect that she is quite insensible to the "awful punishment" which Mrs. Fawcett has evolved from the religious consciousness which loses itself in rhetoric. But what does she think of Clorinda, who killed a white man for something worse than stealing apples?

I see that Mr. William Archer, in the Epilogue of his "Theatrical 'World' of 1895," returns to the subject of the independent or repertory theatre. Such an institution, he thinks, is imperative, if the modern English drama for the enlightened (not the average) playgoer is to make any further progress. Playwrights may continue to turn out dramas suitable to the taste of the 150,000 multitude; but if they are also to pursue their art on a higher plan, they must write for "the public of from 25,000 to 50,000," in a playhouse with sufficient capital to dispense for a while with "any direct pecuniary return." I fear me sadly that, even if the initial obstacles of finance were overcome, the working of such a theatre on the repertory plan would present intractable difficulties. Let us say there is a 30,000 public of the highest dramatic intelligence, that the theatre would seat 1500, and that a play would be performed three times a week. Supposing the house were full every time, this would give the author only twenty performances before his public was exhausted; and, though the rather meagre fees of twenty nights might be supplemented out of a capital not designed for "direct pecuniary return," the business would scarcely prove stimulating to the dramatist's energies. Mr. Archer says the "long-run treatment might be left to actor-managers and their leading ladies"; but leading ladies have a powerful fascination even for the enlightened playgoer, and, unless the new theatre could retain one or two of them, in spite of competition for their services, there might be a dangerous backsliding among the thirty thousand devotees.

Evidently, Mr. Archer counts on the capital holding out till there is a sufficiently large body of dramatists to provide a new and attractive play at least every six weeks. He counts, too, on the assiduous devotion of the thirty thousand who will have to spend pretty nearly all their spare time in encouraging the enterprise. This seems to make rather an exorbitant demand on even the most ardent enthusiasm. It is quite true that the playgoing public is divided into sections; but calculations as to their respective numbers are most fallacious; and it would be sad to have an empty house for the progressive drama whenever a large proportion of your patrons had a fancy for the pastimes of the multitude.

EASTER ARRANGEMENTS.—LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY.

Special Cheap Return Tickets will be issued on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, April 3, 4, and 5, to and from London and the Seaside, available for return on any day up to and including Wednesday, April 8, as per special bills.

EXTRA TRAINS FOR ISLE OF WIGHT.—The 4.55 p.m. from London Bridge will convey Passengers for Ryde, Sandown, Shanklin, Ventnor, Newport, and Cowes, and the 4.55 p.m. from Victoria for Ryde, Sandown, Shanklin, and Ventnor on April 1, 2, and 4.

PARIS AT EASTER.—SPECIAL CHEAP EXCURSION (First and Second Class only), THURSDAY, April 2, by the Special Express Day Service.—Leaving London Bridge 10 a.m., Victoria 10 a.m., and Kensington (Addison Road) 9.30 a.m.

Excursion Tickets (First, Second, and Third Class) will also be issued by Express Night Service, leaving Victoria 8.50 p.m. and London Bridge 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, April 1 to 6 inclusive.

Returning from Paris by 9 p.m. Night Service only on any day within fourteen days of the date of issue. Fares, First Class, 39s. 3d.; Second Class, 30s. 3d.; Third Class, 26s.

First and Second Class Passengers may return by the Day Service from Paris 10 a.m. on payment of 4s. 9d. and 3s. respectively.

BRIGHTON AND WORTHING.—GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER SUNDAY.—A CHEAP FIRST-CLASS TRAIN from Victoria 10.45 a.m. to Brighton and Worthing, and 12.15 p.m. to Brighton only. Day Return Tickets, 10s. to Brighton, 11s. to Worthing.**BRIGHTON AND WORTHING.—FRIDAY, SATURDAY, AND SUNDAY TO WEDNESDAY.**—SPECIAL CHEAP TICKETS from London by all Trains according to class and by SPECIAL TRAIN, SATURDAY, April 4, from Victoria 2 p.m., calling at Clapham Junction; from Kensington (Addison Road) 1.50 p.m., calling at West Brompton; from London Bridge 2.15 p.m., calling at New Cross, Norwood Junction, and East Croydon; to Brighton and Worthing.

Returning by any Train according to class on any day up to and including Wednesday, April 8. Fares from London, 14s., 8s. 6d., 6s. 4d., to Brighton, and 14s., 9s. 6d., 7s., to Worthing.

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PORTSMOUTH AND THE ISLE OF WIGHT.—SATURDAY TO TUESDAY.—SPECIAL CHEAP TRAINS, SATURDAY, April 4, from Victoria 1 p.m., calling at Clapham Junction; from Kensington (Addison Road) 12.45 p.m., calling at West Brompton, Chelsea, and Battersea; from London Bridge 2.30 p.m. Returning by certain Trains only the following Tuesday evening.**SPECIAL CHEAP DAY EXCURSIONS.—GOOD FRIDAY, EASTER SUNDAY AND MONDAY.**—From London Bridge and Victoria to Brighton, Worthing, Midhurst, Portsmouth, Isle of Wight, Tunbridge Wells, Seaford, Eastbourne, Bexhill, and Hastings; and on EASTER TUESDAY to Brighton and Worthing.**CRYSTAL PALACE.—GOOD FRIDAY.—GRAND SACRED CONCERT.**—FREQUENT DIRECT TRAINS to the Crystal Palace from London Bridge and New Cross, also from Victoria, Kensington (Addison Road), West Brompton, Chelsea, and Clapham Junction.**BRANCH BOOKING-OFFICES.**—For the convenience of Passengers who may desire to take their Tickets in advance, the following Branch Booking-Offices, in addition to those at the Victoria and London Bridge Stations, are now open for the issue of Tickets to all Stations on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway, and to the Isle of Wight, Paris, and the Continent:—

The Company's West-End Booking-Offices, 28, Regent Street, Piccadilly, and 8, Grand Hotel Buildings.

The Company's City Booking-Offices, 6, Arthur Street East, and Hays', 4, Royal Exchange Buildings, Cornhill.

Cook's Tourist Offices, Ludgate Circus, 33, Piccadilly, 13, Cockspur Street, 445, West Strand, 99, Gracechurch Street, 82, Oxford Street, and Euston Road (St. Pancras Station).

Gaze's Tourist Offices, 142, Strand, 18, Westbourne Grove, 4, Northumberland Avenue, and Piccadilly Circus.

Jakins', 6, Camden Road, 99, Leadenhall Street, and 30, Silver Street, Notting Hill Gau.

Myers', 343, Gray's Inn Road, and 1A, Pentonville Road.

Swan and Leach's, 3, Charing Cross, and 32, Piccadilly Circus.

The Army and Navy Stores, Victoria Street, Westminster.

Civil Service Supply Association, 136, Queen Victoria Street, and Bedford Street, Strand.

For further particulars see Easter Programme and Hand-bills, to be had at all Stations, and at any of the above Offices.

(By Order)

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M I D L A N D — R A I L W A Y.**EASTER HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS.****EASTER EXCURSIONS FROM ST. PANCRAS AND CITY STATIONS.****ON THURSDAY, April 2,**

CHEAP TRAINS will be run from London (St. Pancras and City Stations) to Matlock, Buxton, MANCHESTER, LIVERPOOL, Bolton, BLACKBURN, Bury, ROCHDALE, Oldham, Sheffield, Barnsley, Wakefield, Halifax, LEEDS, BRADFORD, Harrogate, YORK, HULL, SCARBOROUGH, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Lancaster, MORECAMBE, the LAKE DISTRICT, and Carlisle; Leicester, BIRMINGHAM, NOTTINGHAM, Derby, Newark, Lincoln, Burton, Staffordshire Potteries, &c. Tickets will be available for returning on Tuesday, April 7.

SCOTLAND for 4, 8, or 16 days.

On THURSDAY, April 2, a CHEAP FOUR AND EIGHT DAYS' TRIP will also be run to EDINBURGH, GLASGOW, Greenock, Helensburgh, Ayr, Kilmarnock, &c.; also to Stirling, Perth, Dundee, Arbroath, Forfar, Brechin, Montrose, Aberdeen, Inverness, &c.; leaving St. Pancras at 9.15 p.m. Also on FRIDAY, April 3, for two or three days, from St. Pancras, at 9.15 p.m., to EDINBURGH and GLASGOW, for International Association Football Match, England v. Scotland, at Glasgow, April 4. THIRD-CLASS RETURN TICKETS at a SINGLE ORDINARY FARE for the DOUBLE JOURNEY will also be issued, the tickets being available for return ANY DAY WITHIN 16 DAYS from date of issue.

LOCAL EXCURSIONS, EASTER MONDAY, April 6, ST. ALBANS, HARPENDEN, and LUTON (day trips), leaving St. Pancras at 10.15 a.m.

EASTER AT SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.

CHEAP WEEK-END AND DAY EXCURSION TICKETS will be issued to SOUTHEND-ON-SEA during the Easter Holidays, as announced in Special Bills.

Tickets and Bills may be had at the MIDLAND STATIONS and CITY BOOKING OFFICES, and from Thos. Cook and Son, Ludgate Circus, and Branch Offices.

ORDINARY TRAIN SERVICE.**GOOD FRIDAY, April 3.**

On Good Friday the Trains will run as appointed for Sundays, with the following exceptions:—

The Newspaper Express will leave ST. PANCRAS at 5.15 a.m. and call at Bedford at 6.13 a.m., Leicester at 7.16, Nottingham 8.3, Derby 8.10, Sheffield 8.55, Leeds 10.50 a.m., Manchester (Central) 10 a.m., and Liverpool (Central) 12.20 p.m.

The Up Night Scotch Express will leave EDINBURGH and GLASGOW at 9.45 p.m. and CARLISLE at 12.38 a.m. for LONDON as on week-days.

The 3.32 a.m. CARLISLE to STRANRAER, and 8.50 p.m. STRANRAER to CARLISLE (in connection with trains from and to London and the South and West), will run as usual in connection with Steamers to and from Ireland.

The Steamers between BARROW and BELFAST will sail on GOOD FRIDAY in both directions. That from Barrow will await the arrival of the 4.5 p.m. Train from Leeds.

ON EASTER MONDAY, April 6,

certain booked trains will be DISCONTINUED, of which due notice will be given by Special Bills at the Stations.

Derby, March, 1896.

GEO. H. TURNER, General Manager.

G R E A T N O R T H E R N R A I L W A Y.**EASTER HOLIDAYS.****CHEAP EXCURSIONS FROM LONDON.**

THURSDAY NIGHT, APRIL 2, for six days, to Newcastle, Berwick, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Helensburgh, Stirling, Perth, Dundee, Oban, Montrose, Aberdeen, Inverness, and other stations in Scotland, from London (Woolwich Arsenal, Woolwich Dockyard, Victoria (L.C. and D.), Ludgate Hill, Moorgate, Aldersgate, Farringdon, King's Cross (G.N.), and Finsbury Park). Returning April 6 or 10.

GOOD FRIDAY NIGHT, APRIL 3, for two or three days, to Edinburgh and Glasgow, from London (Woolwich Arsenal, Woolwich Dockyard, Victoria (L.C. and D.), Ludgate Hill, Moorgate, Aldersgate, Farringdon, and King's Cross), returning on April 5 or 6.

TICKETS AT A SINGLE FARE FOR THE DOUBLE JOURNEY will also be issued by above excursions to places named, available for return by one fixed train on any day within sixteen days, including date of issue and return.

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, for six days, to Cambridge, St. Ives, Wisbech, Lynn, Cromer, Norwich, Yarmouth, Lincoln, Spalding, Boston, Grimsby, Leicester, Nottingham, Derby, Burton, Stoke, Newark, Sheffield, Barnsley, Huddersfield, Manchester, Stockport, Warrington, Liverpool, Doncaster, Wakefield, Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Keighley, Hull, York, Harrogate, Scarborough, Whitby, Bridlington, Middlesbrough, Stockton, Hartlepool, Darlington, Durham, Richmond, Newcastle, &c., from Woolwich (Arsenal and Dockyard), Victoria (L.C. and D.), Ludgate Hill, Moorgate, Aldersgate, Farringdon, and King's Cross (G.N.), returning April 7.

EASTER MONDAY, APRIL 6, for one day to St. Albans, Wheathampstead, Harpenden, Luton, Dunstable, Hitchin, Royston, Cambridge, Skegness, Sutton-on-Sea, and Mablethorpe, from Moorgate, Aldersgate, Farringdon, King's Cross, &c.

For further particulars see bills, to be obtained at Company's stations and town offices.

HENRY OAKLEY, General Manager.

S O U T H - W E S T E R N R A I L W A Y.**EASTER HOLIDAYS.****CHANNEL ISLANDS, HAVRE, ST. MALO, AND CHERBOURG (via SOUTHAMPTON).**

SPECIAL EASTERTIDE CHEAP TRIP. On April 2, 3, 4, and 6, cheap Third-Class Return Tickets to GUERNSEY, JERSEY, and HAVRE, will be issued from Waterloo, Kensington (Addison Road), &c., by any ordinary Train, available to return any day (Sundays excepted) within fourteen days of the date of issue. Return Fare, Third Class by Rail and Fore Cabin by Steamer, 25s. Similar tickets will be issued to ST. MALO on April 3 and 6, and to CHERBOURG on April 2 and 4.

SPECIAL CHEAP EXCURSIONS.

CHEAP THIRD-CLASS RETURN TICKETS from London to PLYMOUTH, Tavistock, Camelford, WADEBRIDGE, BODMIN, Launceston, Holsworthy, ILFRACOMBE, Barnstaple, Lynton, Bideford, EXETER, WEYMOUTH, DORCHESTER, Swanage, Bournemouth, Bath, Wells, Radstock, Shepton Mallet, &c., will be issued by all trains on April 2 and subsequent days, up to and including April 6 (not to Somerset and Dorset Line Stations on April 3 or 5), available to return up to and including April 8.

EXCURSIONS will leave WATERLOO as under, calling at the principal stations, on Thursday, April 2.

At 8.20 a.m. for Andover, Salisbury, Templecombe, Sherborne, Axminster, Seaton, Sidmouth, Okehampton, Bridgwater, Wells, Burnham, &c.

At 9 a.m. for Marlborough, Swindon, Cheltenham, Yeovil, EXETER, Exmouth, PLYMOUTH, Tavistock, Launceston, Camelford, Wadebridge (for North Cornwall Coach), Bodmin, Holsworthy (for Bude), Barnstaple, Lynton, Ilfracombe, Bideford (for Clovelly), &c.

At 11.55 a.m. for Lymington, Yarmouth (for Freshwater), Corfe Castle, Swanage, DORCHESTER, WEYMOUTH, Portland, &c., and at 12.10 p.m. for Bournemouth, Poole, Southampton (West), Winchester, &c.

At 1 p.m. for Radstock, Bath, &c.

The tickets issued by the above will be available to return by certain ordinary trains on April 9, 10, or 11.

SPECIAL EXTRA FAST TRAINS will leave Waterloo on Thursday, April 2, as follows: At 2.5 p.m. for Christchurch, Bournemouth. At 4.40 p.m. for Winchester, Southampton (West) Christchurch, and Bournemouth; and at 4.45 p.m. for Salisbury, Yeovil, Exeter, and the WEST OF ENGLAND and NORTH DEVON Lines. The 5 p.m. West of England train from Waterloo will convey passengers to North Devon Stations, &c.

To the WEST OF ENGLAND, NORTH and SOUTH DEVON, and NORTH CORNWALL. SPECIAL LATE TRAINS on Thursday, April 2, will leave Waterloo Station at 10.15 p.m. for Salisbury, Yeovil, and Exeter, and intermediate stations, and AT 12.10 MIDNIGHT for SOUTH and NORTH DEVON and North Cornwall.

Full particulars can be obtained at any of the Company's Stations or London Receiving Houses, or from G. T. White, Superintendent of the Line, Waterloo Station.

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ONE THOUSAND POUNDS will be paid by the above Corporation to the legal representative of any person killed by an accident to the train in which the deceased was an ordinary ticket-bearing passenger, and who, at the time of such accident, had upon his person this ticket, with his, or her, usual signature, written in ink or pencil on the space provided below, which is the essence of this contract.

PROVIDED ALSO that the said sum will be paid to the legal representative of such person injured should death result from such accident within three calendar months thereafter.

This Insurance holds good for the current week of issue only, and entitles the holder to the benefit of and is subject to the conditions of the "Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company, Limited, Act," 1890, Risks Nos. 2 and 3.

The purchase of this publication is admitted to be the payment of a Premium under Sec. 34 of the Act. A Print of the Act can be seen at the office of this Journal or of the said Corporation. No person can recover on more than one Coupon Ticket in respect of the same risk.

March 25, 1896.

Signature.....

ACTORS IN ARMS.

THE PROPOSED ACTORS' RIFLE COMPANY.

Rumours have been rife for some little time that a military movement was on foot among the members of the theatrical profession, and so, with a view to obtaining the most authentic particulars regarding the new departure, a *Sketch* representative called at the Lyceum on Mr. Frank Gillmore, whose name has been closely identified with the scheme.

For a moment or two Mr. Gillmore was reluctant just at present to expose the infant project to the publicity of an interview; but the persuasive Press, representing that its genial influence might probably help the babe to grow, shortly overcame his scruples, and he most kindly imparted all the information it was in his power to supply.

"I should mention," said Mr. Gillmore, "that the inception of the scheme is in no way due to me. The real founder is Mr. Charles Clifford. Mr. Clifford is not in town, and, consequently, has not all the facilities for initial organisation which London residence affords, so I am acting for him.

"At the moment, the project has all the uncertainty of a scheme *en l'air*, but by next week I trust it may be an accomplished fact. The difficulties of the undertaking are, I need not say, somewhat exceptional."

"In the matter of attendance at drill, for instance, Mr. Gillmore?"

"Precisely. The members of the theatrical profession could attend only during the day. Company and recruit drills are not such an obstacle, but battalion parades are rather a difficulty. Still, we trust that concessions will be made to us by the authorities."

"The 'powers that be' are already interested, I believe?"

Lord Methuen has been approached by Mr. Clifford, and has given him authority to form a company, on the understanding that, if a sufficient number of members should signify their willingness to join, further steps would at once be taken."

"And the response has been——?"

"Most gratifying. There has long been a feeling that the theatrical profession should be represented in the ranks of the volunteers, and it may be that recent warlike events had the effect of bringing matters definitely to a point. I may mention that among our promised recruits are Mr. F. R. Benson and Mr. Harry Nichols. There are, of course, many other distinguished names as well, but these occur to me at the moment. The result is all the more gratifying that it has been, in a great measure, spontaneous. We neither called a general meeting nor sent out a circular. By the way, there have been some curious misconceptions. Some have had it that we contemplate forming a corps, others have called it a regiment. But all we think of at present is a company, though, if that succeeds, it may very properly form the nucleus of a bigger organisation at some future day."

"Then, Mr. Gillmore, should the company be definitely organised, you would seek affiliation with some established corps?"

"That would certainly be desirable, but, in the meantime, it's too delicate a subject to discuss. That reminds me of another point we hope to carry. It may be possible for members when on tour in the provinces to put in their drills with local companies, and so make themselves efficient in the regular way. Of course, I cannot make it too plain that, good as our hopes are, they are as yet only hopes; but we trust that the interest shown, and the exceptional circumstances, will carry their full weight in the matter of concessions.

"One part of our duty," said Mr. Gillmore in conclusion, "we shall, at least, be able to attend to with considerable ease—I mean, in the matter of shooting we perhaps have the pull of most professional men as regards opportunity for practice. Of course, it is a company of rifles that is proposed."

Then, expressing the wish that Mr. Gillmore and his gallant comrades may very shortly be seen in their new rôle, the interviewer took leave, and Mr. Gillmore went to resume his part in "For the Crown," a most appropriate play, indeed, for an actor-volunteer.

A RAILWAY DINNER.

At the Second Annual Dinner of the Headquarters Staff and Station-masters of the London and South-Western Railway, which took place at the Freemasons' Tavern, on Wednesday evening, the company numbered close upon 400. Sir Charles Scotter, who presided, said that the South-Western had 280 station-masters, and the fact that more than 150 of them were present spoke well for organisation and discipline observed on the railway. At Waterloo, Mr. Hilditch had under his charge 37 parcels-clerks, 25 booking-clerks, 18 telegraph-clerks, 19 inspectors, and the rank and file—porters, shunters, cleaners, and other men on the permanent staff of the Company—numbered some 504, so that about 660 men were permanently engaged in carrying on the work at Waterloo Station alone. As an instance of what that work was, he mentioned that on the two busiest days of last year—the Saturday before Whit-Monday, and Whit-Monday—on the Saturday 945 trains, and on the Monday 985 trains, passed in and out of Waterloo Station in the twenty-four hours. During the last five years the South-Western had carried 285 millions of people, and during that time they had never killed a single passenger. In 1892, which was the last published record, 247 people were killed in the streets of London, whereas, in that particular year, on the whole of the railways in the country, carrying thousands of millions of people, only five passengers were killed. During the last five years the passenger-traffic had increased at the rate of 2,000,000 a-year.

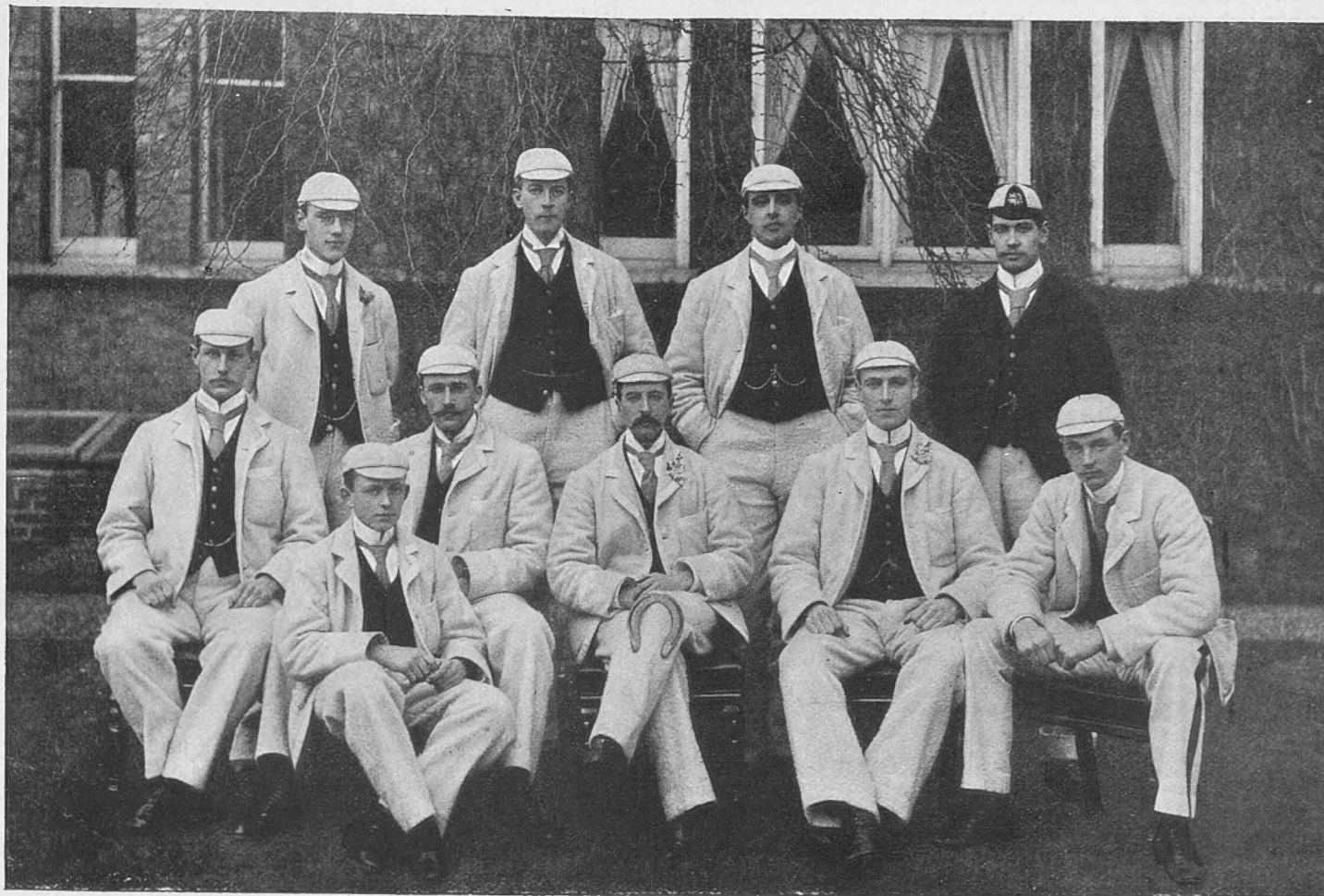
THE UNIVERSITY BOAT-RACE.

D. Pennington

T. J. G. Duncanson.

R. Y. Bonsey.

E. J. D. Taylor (reserve).



W. A. Bieber.

W. J. Fernle (stroke).
T. R. Paget-Tomlinson (cox.).

T. B. Hope.

H. A. Game.

A. S. Bell.

THE CAMBRIDGE CREW.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY STEARN, CAMBRIDGE.

R. Carr.

H. Gold (stroke).

E. C. Sherwood.

J. J. de Knoop.

E. R. Balfour



C. D. Burnell.

W. E. Crum.
H. K. Pechell (cox.).

C. K. Phillips.

THE OXFORD CREW.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. RUSSELL AND SONS, BAKER STREET, W.

THE LONDON EAST ANGLIAN SOCIETY.

Any stranger who happened to be in the gallery of the King's Hall at the Holborn Restaurant on the night of the first East Anglian banquet must have been struck by the fact that East Anglia produces the only people worth talking about. It is true that two of the speakers, Mr. Robert Price, the member for East Norfolk, and Mr. L. F. Austin, admitted that they were not East Anglians by birth or by any family tie; but they did it with moral abasement, and not with cynical effrontery. As for the rest of the company, they simply revelled in the sentiment of Mr. Edward Clodd, who said they ought to pass two resolutions: (1) That East Anglians govern the earth; (2) That we are the East Anglians. Mr. Arthur Spurgeon, the Vice-Chairman, to whose vigorous initiative the organisation of the Society is chiefly due, recited a long roll of East Anglian worthies, even including Queen Elizabeth. Then Mr. Corrie Grant reproved Mr. Spurgeon for having overlooked various people of renown, and Mr. Clodd came out with a fresh list, which contained Tom Paine. Oddly enough, nobody mentioned King Alfred, who must have been an East Anglian, and whose burnt cakes, together with the Norfolk dumplings which, according to Mr. Corrie Grant, are made exclusively in Suffolk, were omitted from the bill of fare. But the chair was occupied by a genuine East Anglian hero in the person of Sir Evelyn Wood, who, after listening to a fervid eulogy of his achievements in war, told two stories at his own



expense with the modesty of the true soldier. An old country-woman, walked a long way to see him, after his return from one of his campaigns, and when she saw him she exclaimed, "Him kill all those Zulus! Why, my old man could clout him!" Another old lady was asked by a friend what he had done, and, after much hesitation, she responded, "Well, I don't know what he's done, but he's the celebrated Admiral who was at the storming of Sebastopol!" Among the company there were redoubtable East Anglians who direct several powerful journals in the Metropolis. The Mayor of Norwich, resplendent in his chain of office, fixed his eye on the editor of the *Daily Chronicle*, whose name he murmured with pride not unmixed with awe. Even the musicians were members of an East Anglian family, and they were watched with an approving gaze by no less a person than Dan Godfrey, who might have asserted, without fear of contradiction, that the whole band of the Grenadier Guards consisted of East Anglians. Mr. Price recited some amusing verses written specially for the occasion by the Parliamentary Laureate, Sir Wilfrid Lawson. They related to the adventures of a remarkable personage, known to minstrelsy as the Baby on the Shore. Earlier details of the Baby's biography were sung by Mr. Price, who also narrated how the Cat Came Back. Poetry, indeed, was pretty strong throughout the proceedings, for Mr. Austin, in the course of a humble tribute to the East Anglian Members of Parliament, suggested to Mr. Cuthbert Quilter, the champion of "pure beer," these classic lines:—

How small of all that human hearts endure
That part which kings or laws can cause or cure!
Its name is Beer, and they must make it pure!

Mr. Corrie Grant, having annexed the Norfolk dumplings to Suffolk, maintained that there were no such cheeses as the Suffolk cheeses. Then the East Anglians gazed reproachfully at Mr. Spurgeon, as who should say, "Where are those cheeses? Why are they not here, along with Cuthbert Quilter's Pure Beer?" An explanation on the menu that East Anglian dishes, such as Suffolk Bang and Essex Calf's Head, had not been brought to town because they were "best appreciated when served in the counties with which they are respectively associated," was voted weak, and a vote of censure on Mr. Spurgeon and Mr. W. Sharpe, the honorary secretary, was narrowly averted by the intervention of an East Anglian, who sang a song in praise of Gentleman Ned, a highwayman, and probably a good East Anglian, too. After this Mr. F. S. Stevenson made a speech about the ladies, abstaining from the self-evident proposition that the nicest girls came from East Anglia; and then everybody reluctantly went home, amid expressions of the deepest commiseration for other portions of the United Kingdom.

WHERE TO GO AT EASTER.

The railway companies, as usual, are affording facilities for those who wish to travel at Easter. The Brighton and South Coast Railway will issue special Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday to Tuesday tickets from London to Dieppe. On Thursday a fourteen-day excursion to Paris by the picturesque route through the charming scenery of Normandy, to the terminus near the Madeleine, *via* Dieppe and Rouen, will be run from London by the special day express service, and also by the fixed night express service on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, April 1 to 6, inclusive. On Good Friday and Easter Sunday and Monday day trips at greatly reduced Excursion fares will be run from London to Brighton, Hove, St. Leonards, Hastings, &c. Special Saturday to Tuesday tickets will also be issued from London to Portsmouth, Southsea, and the Isle of Wight.

The Midland Railway will, on Thursday, run cheap excursion trains to Leicester, Nottingham, Newark, Lincoln, &c., returning the following Tuesday, and to Scotland, returning April 6 or 10. Tickets will also be issued by the Scotch excursion at a single ordinary third-class fare for the double journey, available for returning on any day within sixteen days from date of issue. On Easter Monday cheap day excursion trains will be run to St. Albans, Harpenden, and Luton. Cheap week-end and day excursion tickets will also be issued to Southend-on-Sea. Cheap excursion trains will also be run to London from the provinces. Passengers will be booked by these trains at cheap fares to Brighton, and other South Coast stations, and to the Continent; those for the Continent having the privilege of returning by any ordinary train within sixteen days.

The London and South-Western will issue cheap tickets for all principal stations from London on Thursday and subsequent days, up to and including April 6, available to return up to and including April 8. A special trip has been arranged to the Channel Islands and Havre. Cheap tickets, 25s., third class by train and fore cabin by steamer, will be issued from Waterloo, Kensington, &c., to Guernsey, Jersey, and Havre on Thursday, April 2, Good Friday, April 3, Saturday, April 4, and Easter Monday, April 6, available to return any day (Sundays excepted) within fourteen days of the date of issue. Similar tickets will be issued to St. Malo and Cherbourg on certain days. Cheap excursions will run from Waterloo as follows:—On Thursday, to Salisbury, Cheltenham, Exeter, Plymouth, Yarmouth, Southampton West, Bourne-mouth, Bath, &c., the tickets being available to return on April 9, 10, or 11; a four-days' excursion from Waterloo at 1.10 p.m. on Saturday, for Southampton, Portsmouth, and the Isle of Wight; day excursions on Easter Sunday, at reduced fares, from Waterloo to various places.

The Great Northern Railway will, on Thursday night, run an excursion, for four or eight days, to Newcastle and Scotland from London, returning April 6 or 10. On Good Friday night a two or three days' excursion will be run to Edinburgh and Glasgow from London, returning on April 5 or 6. Tickets at a single fare for the double journey will also be issued by above excursions to places named, available for return by one fixed train on any day within sixteen days, including date of issue and return. On Thursday an excursion will be run, for six days, to Cambridge, St. Ives, Wisbech, Lynn, Cromer, Norwich, Yarmouth, Lincoln, Spalding, Boston, Grimsby, Leicester, Nottingham, Derby, Burton, Stoke, Newcastle, &c., returning April 7. On Easter Monday a one-day excursion goes to St. Albans, Wheat-hampstead, Harpenden, Luton, Dunstable, Hitchin, Royston, Cambridge, Skegness, Sutton-on-Sea, and Mablethorpe.

The Great Western Railway Company issue tickets at special low fares, and available from April 2 to 6, to Bath, Bristol, Exeter, Plymouth, Falmouth, Penzance, Yeovil, Dorchester, Weymouth, &c. Tickets at twenty-five shillings return, available for fourteen days, will also be issued for use on April 2, 4, and 6, to Guernsey and Jersey. On Thursday, an excursion reaching Exeter in 5½ hours, Plymouth in 7¾ hours, will leave at 7.55 a.m. On Good Friday cheap trains will run to Reading, Oxford, &c. On Saturday an excursion will run to Bath, &c., and on Monday excursions to Reading, Bath, Bristol, &c. On Tuesday, April 7, a cheap half-day excursion will leave at 12 noon for Oxford, Stratford-on-Avon, &c.

The magnificent new 21-knot paddle-steamers of the Zeeland Steamship Company are now running in this service: Berlin to London in twenty hours; arrival Berlin, 8.28 p.m. London to Dresden in twenty-eight hours; arrival Dresden, 12.31 a.m., &c.

The Harwich-Hook of Holland route offers exceptional facilities to persons who wish to spend their Easter holidays in Holland or Germany. The General Steam Navigation Company's passenger-steamers *Peregrine* and *Seamew* will leave Harwich on April 2 and 4 for Hamburg, returning April 5 and 8.

The London and North-Western Railway will, on Wednesday night, run excursions to Stafford, Crewe, Runcorn, Liverpool, Warrington, Widnes, Southport, Preston, and the English Lake District, &c., returning on Tuesday, April 7. On Thursday morning a train will run to Rugby, Nuneaton, Leicester, Tamworth, Lichfield, Burton, Derby, the North Stafford Line, Macclesfield, Aberystwyth, &c., returning Tuesday, April 7. On Thursday night to Birmingham, Coventry, Leamington, Kenilworth, Warwick, Dudley, Dudley Port, Walsall, Wednesbury, and Wolverhampton, returning Monday, April 6, or Tuesday, April 7, and to Scotland, returning on Monday, April 6, or Friday, April 10.

See "The English Illustrated Magazine" for April for a Striking Article on "The Torture of Trained Animals."



A TRIPLE ALLIANCE.

CARL SMIT'S (HOLLAND), GIBBONS BROOKES (ENGLAND), AND EROS GERMANO (ITALY).

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRY R. GIBBS, KINGSLAND ROAD, N.

SMALL TALK.

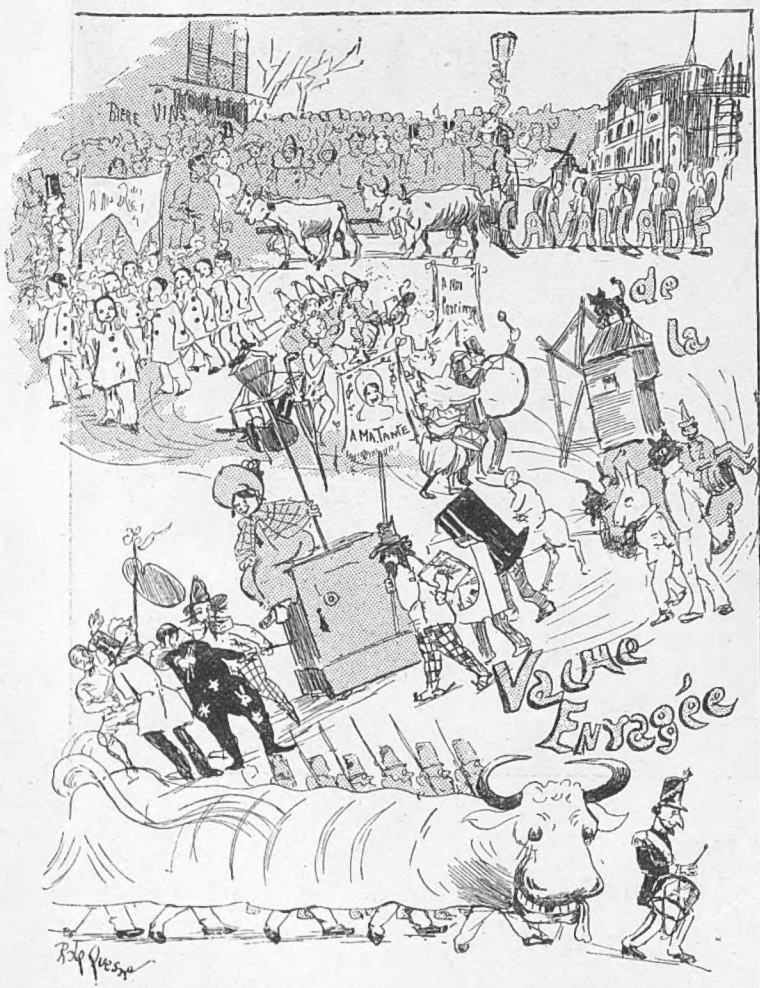
The Queen is enjoying continued good weather at Cimiez. Viscount Cross has arrived as Minister in attendance.

The Duke and Duchess of York appropriately witnessed "For the Crown," at the Lyceum, on Thursday, while on the previous evening they saw "Mrs. Ponderbury." The Duke and Duchess of Fife were among the first-nighters at "True Blue," at the Olympic.

The Queen's bestowal of the colonelcy-in-chief of the King's Dragoon Guards on the Emperor of Austria is very appropriate in view of Dettingen. The 1st Royal Dragoons and the Scots Greys are commanded in the same way by the Kaiser and the Czar.

The last match of the pigeon-shooting season at Monte Carlo was made the occasion of a very gay gathering, for besides all the crack shots of the Riviera, who mustered for the fray, ladies assembled in force and gay garments exceedingly; so much so that the reserved enclosures looked like nothing so much as aviaries of tropical birds, so animated and brilliant were both scene and costumes. Scarcely a breath of air was felt, so the birds had to shift for themselves, which they did very nimbly, poor little things! Great excitement was felt when the prize of the day, at first competed for by thirty-five competitors, was narrowed down to two opponents, Mr. Brinckmann, a splendid shot, and that very popular Austrian, Count Trauttmansdorff. The last-named gentlemen decided to share the awards, amounting to about ninety pounds, while they shot off ties for the gold medal. The Count won this, but Mr. Brinckmann was fittingly awarded a silver medal, his splendid form well earning that distinction. Great preparations were made for the Cannes Regatta. The Duke of Leuchtenberg's smart steam-yacht, *Roxana*, left some days since, in company with Baron Arthur de Rothschild's *Eros*. Everybody who knows swears by Baron Édouard de Rothschild's new yacht, the *Honeymoon*. Lord Wolverton's boat, the *Douschka*, is also a beauty, but the ladies think, if for no other reason than its delightfully suggestive name, the former should "walk over" everything.

The Parisian *Baduud* has had reason to bless the time-honoured institution of Mi-Carême, for the festival has been celebrated in right merry fashion, especially in the Artists' Quarter. At Montmartre, where the fine old studios are now given over to the younger generation of painters, Willette was Master of the Revels. Together with a number of comrades of the brush, he organised a procession of the *Vache Enragée*, and the Saunter of the Mad Cow became an excellent excuse for one of the most original and quaint pageants ever seen in the



MI-CARÊME CARNIVAL IN PARIS.

Artists' Quarter. The French art-student has remained a merry soul. Not so very long ago many world-famed painters lived and worked on the heights of Montmartre. They now seek studios in smarter Passy, on the confines of the Bois de Boulogne. Even Jan van Beers has

followed the general example, and his beautiful atelier, overlooking the cemetery where *Ileine* lies, is now given over to a group of *rapins*. Montmartre, with its steep, narrow streets, and irregular architecture, is admirably adapted for a Mi-Carême Carnival, and the whole population entered with the heartiest zest into Willette's Lenten joke.

It is with sincere regret that I record the death of one of the brilliant quartette of Terry sisters, Florence, who some dozen years ago left the stage to become the wife of Mr. W. Morris, a member of the legal firm of Ashurst, Morris, and Co. Mrs. Morris, who died of peritonitis, after an operation, leaves four children, as well as her husband, sisters, and a large circle of friends, to mourn her loss. I must have seen Miss Florence Terry at a very early period of her theatrical career, for it was as long ago as the winter of 1870, when the actress could have been but fourteen years of age, that I saw her play "Little Nell" at the Olympic, with that sound old actor, the late Mr. Belmore. I believe that an old colleague and friend, Miss Alma Murray (who, at a still earlier age, had appeared at the Olympic in Gilbert's play "The Princess"), was Florence Terry's understudy as Little Nell. The two young actresses, at a later date, were associated in Sir Henry Irving's management, and, when "The Merchant of Venice" was produced at the Lyceum, Florence Terry was the Nerissa and Alma Murray the Jessica to Ellen Terry's Portia, and for some nights, during the leading lady's indisposition, her sister Florence played the companion to Miss Murray's Portia. Older playgoers will remember Florence Terry in "The Turn of the Tide," at the Olympic in '77, and as the original Ellen in Mr. Wills's unsuccessful play of that name at the Haymarket in the spring of '79. In the provinces she sustained many prominent parts with success, but her early retirement from the boards gave Londoners no opportunity of seeing her assumption of these more important characters. To that charming actress, Miss Marion Terry, who was Mrs. Morris's almost inseparable companion, one's sympathy in the sad event is specially due.



THE LATE MISS FLORENCE TERRY (MRS. MORRIS).
Photo by London Stereoscopic Co., Regent Street, W.

Should any jaded Londoner desire a refreshing glimpse of the genuine *rus in urbe*, he has only to scale the dizzy heights of an omnibus passing along Whitehall, and gaze at the deserted site of what was once the town mansion of Lord Carrington. The vacant space at the present time is a mass of grasses, wild flowers, and weeds, interspersed with the dead fronds of the brake-fern, rarely seen except in country places—the plot might indeed have been removed bodily from some Surrey hill. Why this excellent site has been left for so many years unoccupied is one of those official mysteries which, as the late Lord Dundreary used to observe, "no fellow can find out." Why don't the Government build a new Charity Commission Office on the spot, instead of taking—as I hear they intend to do—that delightful piece of old-fashioned garden, with its lilacs and syringas, which lies between Gwydr House and the western boundary of the Duke of Buccleuch's mansion? Greenery is not so plentiful in Whitehall that this latter can be spared without a murmur.

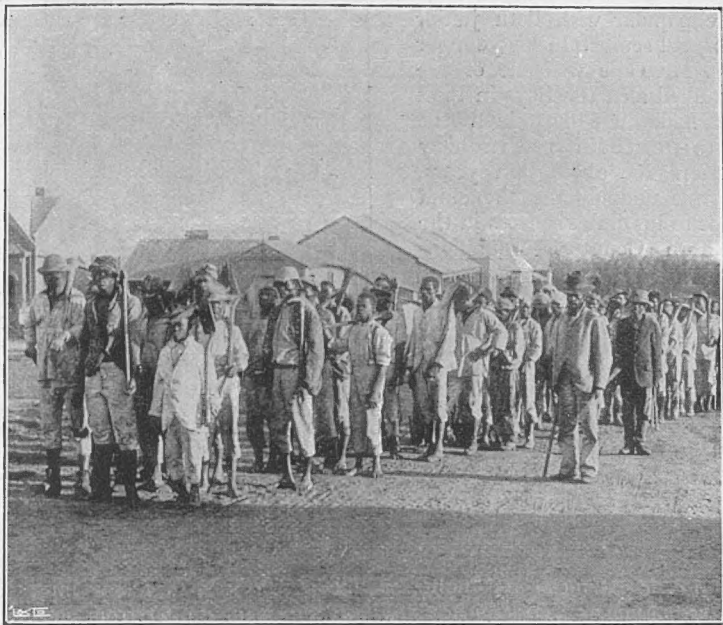
History repeated itself, as usual, on Thursday night at the headquarters of the Artists' Corps, in the case of the smoking concert—that is to say, the annual "special" was a huge success. A programme of fifty items, bar one, went off with tremendous *éclat*. The arrangements of the committee, directed by the genial secretary, Corporal Fry, left nothing to be desired, and the drinks were served out in a smart and soldierlike manner by a number of the corps, who generously volunteered to act as canteen orderlies. The chair was filled by Major Lamb and Captain Willoughby Weiss, who kept the ball rolling from eight o'clock till two, at which hour the regimental chorus, "King Henry," brought the long list of turns to a close, and it only remained to sing "God save the Queen," which was given in a manner worthy of such a crack battalion. A large number of artists, professional and amateur, kindly gave their services to make the time speed merrily. The end came all too soon, alas! and then the word was "Home," not an unusual order of transport being nine in a "growler," two, of course, perched on the top.

The terrible dynamite explosion which took place at Johannesburg on Ash Wednesday must have put "Dr. Jim" out of the heads of the citizens for the time being. It was caused by the explosion of fifty-five tons of dynamite, which had been lying in railway-trucks in the glare of the sun. So terrible was the explosion that a huge hole was torn in the earth two hundred feet long and thirty feet deep. Devastation has been caused throughout the whole town. The melancholy procession of grave-diggers shown in the accompanying photograph will give some idea of the death list.

A firm of jewellers carrying on business in the Strand has just been cleverly victimised, and I think that a public warning will serve the interests of the trade. Some few days ago a stranger came to the shop

a duffer, his loss will be about fifteen of the best. Truly, one needs the eyes of Argus and an intelligence to match to practise the gentle art of dealing in precious things.

I was sorry to learn that Captain Erroll, R.N., the popular officer who was in charge of the transport *Manila* during the recent Ashanti Expedition, had contracted the horrible Gold Coast fever just before the return of his ship to this country, had been transferred to the hospital-ship *Coromandel*, and had been landed at Las Palmas to recoup his strength. I am glad to say that letters from this island inform me that Captain Erroll, though terribly prostrated by the complaint, is now making a somewhat slow recovery. Mrs. Erroll has joined her husband at Las Palmas, and their large circle of friends may hope to see them



GRAVE-DIGGERS.



THE DUTCH CHURCH.



SEARCHING FOR BODIES.



A PIT CAUSED BY THE EXPLOSION.

Photographs by Messrs. Nicholls and by Messrs. Duffus Brothers, Johannesburg.

in question, and produced an antique case, for which he asked twenty pounds, saying he had been offered twenty-five, but hesitated to take the offer, and could not get it repeated. The shop-owner said he would not buy, but would keep it, and try to sell on commission. The intending vendor, whom I will call Mr. A., was satisfied and withdrew. On the following day, a stranger, well-dressed and respectable, came in to see some "antiques." The case was shown to him, among other things. It took his fancy; he asked the price. "Twenty-five pounds," said the dealer. "I'll take it," said the stranger, and then, feeling in his pockets, said he had left his pocket-book at home, and had not enough money to pay for it. "However," he continued, "keep it for me until the end of the week, when I shall be passing again, and I'll leave you a deposit of a couple of sovereigns." Two days after Mr. A. reappeared. "I must have that case back, please," he said. "I have an offer of twenty-five pounds for it again." Here was a quandary from which the dealer finally emerged by paying twenty-two pounds cash. Needless to say, neither Mr. A. nor the respectable customer has been seen since, and the case is worth, at forced sale, about five pounds. Unless the dealer meets

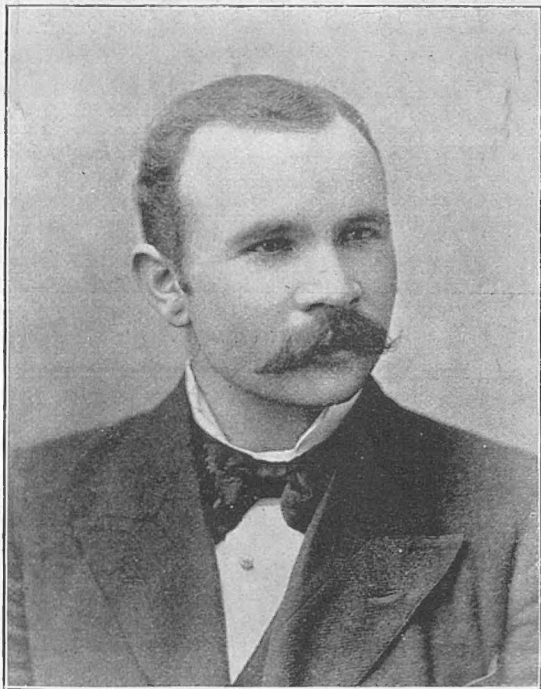
in England when there is no risk of our spring-like winter being superseded by a wintry spring, as is sometimes the case.

I would once again remind the many readers of *The Sketch* who subscribe to Mudie's that the Saturday early-closing season of the great New Oxford Street Library begins on Easter Eve, April 4, the date also fixed for the production of "The Gay Parisienne" at the Duke of York's Theatre, and the new Sims-Shirley drama at the Princess's, and for the opening of Sir Augustus Harris's spring season of opera at Drury Lane. Mudie's Library will shut at two o'clock on Saturdays right away up to the end of October. Perhaps in time the practice will be extended to "all the year round."

At Mr. Glossop Such's forthcoming performance in aid of the Home of Rest for Horses—the seventh he has given on behalf of that excellent and deserving institution—"The Merchant of Venice" will be presented. The character of Portia will then be sustained, I am told, by Mrs. Charles Wyllie.

London was adequately supplied with concerts on St. Patrick's Day, or rather, night. The Albert Hall had a large audience to enjoy a capital programme under Mr. William Carter's conductorship. Mr. Bispham sang in splendid style. At the Queen's Hall, Mr. Vert had arranged a national concert, which delighted hundreds of Irish men and women. Several in the audience were "wearers of the green," and the applause of such a song as "Who dares to speak of '98?" was almost embarrassing in its warmth. The only cool hearer of Mr. William Ludwig's fervid singing was a gentleman in front of me, who asked his neighbour, "Why does he make such a 'ymn of it?" But then he was an obvious Cockney. Miss Grace Woodward—a sweet singer—Miss Florence Daly, Mr. Herbert Grover, Madame Medora Henson, and others ministered to the general pleasure. It was a pity that the audience punctuated the verses with applause. Last to be mentioned, though, of course, first in the list of artists, is Miss Ella Russell, who was in fine voice. Begorra, it was a grand night!

The success of the dinner of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorian at the Hôtel Métropole on St. Patrick's Day was largely contributed to by the splendid singing of the Rhondda Glee Society, under the conductorship of Mr. Tom Stephens. The Duke of York expressed himself much pleased with the singing, and Lord Tredegar, the chairman, in a graceful speech thanked Mr. Llewellyn Williams, the President of the Rhondda Glee Society, for bringing, at his own expense, the society to London to sing at this banquet. Mr. Williams, who has spent many years in Australia, has made good use of his time since he has been in the Old Country in encouraging and supporting the national music which he loves so well.



MR. LLEWELLYN WILLIAMS.

It was he who took a leading part in the arrangements for the visit of the Treorkey Male Voice Choir to sing before the Queen at Windsor a few months ago. He has assiduously looked out for good voices, and has defrayed the cost of giving the possessors of such voices a musical education. One of his protégés is Mr. Ivor Foster, whose singing on the occasion of the Cymmrodorian Banquet was a feature of the evening. The liberality Mr. Williams has displayed in the encouragement of Welsh music has won him great popularity in the Principality, and several constituencies have invited him to stand for Parliament. It is feared, however, that his early return to Australia will prevent this invitation being accepted—at least, for the present.

Mr. Mulholland's enterprise has provided Camberwell with a flourishing theatre, and ere long that teeming neighbourhood will have a music-hall of its own, which will spring up within a stone's throw of the above-mentioned temple of Thespis. An ancient hostelry, the Golden Lion to wit, with its bowling-green, skittle-alley, and outhouses, has been obtained, which, with several adjoining shops, forms an excellent site for a venture that should be attended with success. I see that those popular playmates, Dan Leno and Herbert Campbell, are among the directors, and if these gentlemen intend to devote some of their many talents to the stage as well as to the offices of the undertaking, there can be little doubt as to the attractiveness of the first genuine variety show of the southern suburbs. By the way, I notice, talking of the southern suburbs, that the handsome building at Brixton, the foundation-stone of which was laid by our knightly actor-manager of the Lyceum, still hangs in the wind. The enterprising individual or syndicate by whom it is eventually launched should, I think, reap a golden harvest (some confusion of metaphors here, I fancy) in the shape of dividends.

Steady advance has been made by Miss Florence Bourne, who gave a charming recital a few days ago in St. Martin's Town Hall. This talented

young lady appeared to great advantage with Mr. Manton Cathcart in a comedietta by Ernest Warren, and a farce entitled "Psychical Research." She recited selections from that pillar of American literature, General Lew Wallace, Miss Beatrice Harraden, and Mr. Zangwill. The interesting programme was varied by pleasant music rendered by Miss Amy Hickling, Miss Madge Conroy, and Mr. Arthur Cullin.

There is, perhaps, no better-known man in London athletic circles than Mr. Ralph Gale, the new president of the Southern Counties Association, and none more popular with both junior clubs and senior. In his younger days, Mr. Gale was one of the best-liked men the Boys in Pink ever had. He has held the captaincy of the Finchley Harriers for about ten years, and was undoubtedly the chief factor to his club's success in the Southern Counties Championship two years in succession. In 1886 he scored first for the Finchleyites in both the Southern and National Championships, and he has competed in all these events from 1884 to 1889. Mr. Gale has won innumerable prizes at all distances, but his best races have ever been cross-country.



MR. RALPH GALE.

Photo by Boarder, Cambridge Road, W.

The Barnby Memorial Trust Fund is taking shape, and the Committee of the Guildhall School of Music have seen their way to acting generously in the matter. Sir Joseph, as all those who knew him more or less well will readily testify, was a most devoted husband and father, and none of his professional work ever interfered with home claims. I hear that Miss Muriel Barnby, Sir Joseph's only daughter, is already studying for the operatic stage. She will start with great advantages, for I am sure there is no member of the profession but would do his or her level best to give a helping hand to the daughter of Sir Joseph Barnby. Sir Arthur Sullivan is the hon. treasurer to the Memorial Fund, and subscriptions should be sent to Alfred Littleton, Esq., 1, Berners Street, W. Sir Joseph's successor at the Guildhall is offered a salary of £1000 a-year. The increase of students this term was so unprecedentedly large that Sir Joseph had to select several new professors.

The success of Mr. Wilson Barrett in "The Sign of the Cross," at the Lyric, recalls to my memory one of his staunchest colleagues of old. Mr. Austin Melford, who created the part of the queer lawyer in "Cheer, Boys, Cheer," and who recently made a "hit" as Eliza the Cook in "Dick Whittington," at the Court Theatre, Liverpool. He began as an amateur at Portsmouth, appearing in the sketches written by his brother Mark, who was afterwards to give us "Turned Up," "Kleptomaniac," and other pieces. He made his first appearance in London at the Surrey Theatre, in "Cast Adrift," and shortly after he came across Mr. Wilson Barrett at Leeds, becoming a member of the Princess's Theatre Company in 1886, and accompanying Mr. Barrett to America in the autumn of that year. He knows the Barrett repertoire up and down—"Clito," "The Lights o' London," "Hamlet," and the rest. Many still remember his powerful impersonation of Elijah Coombe in the revival of "The Silver King," and as the Deemster in "The Ben-my-Chree" he earned the special commendation of Mr. Hall Caine. Mrs. Austin Melford (née Miss Alice Gambier) was at one time also a prominent member of Mr. Barrett's company. She took the part of Miss Christian in "The Manxman," and is, in her way, as good an actress as her husband is an actor.



MR. MELFORD AS APPIUS CLAUDIUS.

Photo by Kuebler, Philadelphia.

One of the attractions of the April *Blackwood* will be the first part of Miss Harraden's new story, "Hilda Strafford." The scene is laid in California, the land where Miss Harraden has found the health and strength so vainly sought for elsewhere. The story is said to be the best Miss Harraden has yet written.

Mr. Tom Heslewood has sent me this amusing picture of Sir Henry Irving among the snakes and alligators of the Mississippi. It is suggested by the recent adventure of the Lyceum Company, thus described in a private letter from an eye-witness: "We were in great danger from the Mississippi floods; coal on the engine ran short; the bridge we had just crossed was swept away; and, though there was plenty of drift-wood about, great snakes were sitting on each log, and the water was full of alligators." I congratulate Sir Henry and his comrades most heartily on their escape from these embarrassing admirers. Evidently the snakes and the alligators had assembled for a *matinée* performance, and were quite prepared to swallow the whole Lyceum repertory.

Political troubles notwithstanding, pleasing social amenities have lately marked more noticeably than ever the professional journeys of British actors across the Atlantic. For instance, besides all the ceremonies attending the triumphal progress of Sir Henry and the Lyceum Company, Miss Julia Neilson, and Mr. Fred Terry were recently the guests of the Boston Playgoer's Club during the visit of the Hare Company to "the hub of the universe."

So careful an actor-manager and scholarly a Shaksperian student as Mr. F. R. Benson is will, of course, take pains to please visitors to the forthcoming Shakspeare Celebration at Stratford-on-Avon with an adequate presentation of "Richard II." This historical play, which is now being revived after a very long stage-rest, will be the twenty-eighth of the great bard's works performed at Stratford since the establishment of the Memorial Theatre. "Richard II." was given, in the usual platform way, by the Shakspeare Reading Society, at Steinway Hall, some little time back, and I then noted the many sonorous passages to which fine effect could be given by fully equipped Shaksperian actors. Of course, we need not expect at Stratford the strength of the cast of the famous Charles Kean revival at the Princess's in 1857; but I do not doubt that, both pictorially and histrionically, Mr. Benson and his company will repay people the trouble of a pilgrimage to Shakspeare's birthplace.

The last meeting of the Playgoer's Club furnished a fine sample of the "things one would rather have said differently" that *Punch* has made famous. One of the speakers, in referring to the chief critics, after naming Mr. William Archer, Mr. Walkley, and Mr. Bernard Shaw, mentioned, in terms of admiration, one whom he described as the "veiled prophet" in a box. No one was so unkind as to point out the *bévue*, to hint that even the poet now on the war-path would

not have called Mr. Clement Scott a "veiled prophet" if mindful of the lines—

Here—judge if Hell, with all its power to damn,
Can add one curse to the foul thing I am.

It reminds me of a friend of mine, who, being in love with a girl called "Leah," addressed her a long poem, each stanza of which began "Leah the tender-eyed." He never ventured to go near after someone had



SIR HENRY IRVING ON THE MISSISSIPPI.

told him that the "tender-eyed" meant "sore-eyed," and refers to the ophthalmia common in the East. Mr. James Welch, who gave a very clever, interesting lecture upon "Beginners on the Stage," was so fortunate as to have Miss Evelyn Millard as chairwoman. For a novice in the art of addressing a crowd in one's own words, the charming representative of the Princess Flavia showed a surprising skill, and she seems to be a born orator. It may be put on record that Mr. James Welch had the courage to suggest that what he called "judicious gagging" is not only useful, but even praiseworthy. The word "judicious" obviously begs the question.

Some time ago I took the City seriously to task in one of these paragraphs, pointed out its noisy ugliness, and called upon it to reform and improve. Judge of my surprise when, on going back to the neighbourhood of the General Post Office last week, I found the City as loud and vulgar as ever. There was no mistake about it, although every newsagent does a large trade in the sale of *The Sketch*. To add to my distress, a fine day had tempted me to go out too early, and I had an hour before my appointment was due. Driven by noisy cries of every description, I sought refuge in the cool and quiet old church of St. Bartholomew the Great, in the parish of West Smithfield. I am glad that I did so, for I am able to call attention to the fact that the repairs and restoration of one of the oldest and most interesting City churches are at a standstill for lack of the necessary funds.

The Duke and Duchess of Teck witnessed "The Grand Duke" at the Savoy last week.

Other entertainment-people have now taken up that Dr. Nansen "wheeze" to which I lately referred, and at present it seems a taking theme. A more serious enterprise is that being undertaken in the New World, where Miss Marie Burroughs is to play the leading part in a melodrama relating to expeditions to high latitudes, and entitled "The Polar Star."

Mr. Ben Greet is always introducing promising young people to the profession. As the latest instance of this, I note that Miss M. Campbell Mackenzie is now playing the part of Dacia in "The Sign of the Cross" (South) Company. This young lady is, if I mistake not, the daughter of the Principal of the Royal Academy of Music.

I was glad to have the opportunity the other day of renewing my acquaintance with "The Gondoliers," which was performed by a company of amateurs in Lordship Lane. The performance all round was good, but I would accord the honours of the evening to Mr. A. Richardson, who was the Grand Inquisitor.



AMATEURS IN "THE GONDOLIERS."

Photo by Wright, Upper Norwood.

Tessa (Miss Stella Henderson). Gulseppe (Mr. E. Oliver). Glanetta (Mrs. A. V. Mansell). Marco (Mr. G. Fawcett).

Another twist to the tail of the brave old British Lion! A very novel chess-contest has taken place by Atlantic cable between teams representing America and England, and limited to native-born players. Play began on Friday, in the Pillar Room, Cannon Street Hotel, and



SIR GEORGE NEWNES' TROPHY.

was continued from 3 to 12 p.m., with an hour's interval for dinner, the adjourned games being resumed at 3 p.m. on Saturday, and brought to a close shortly before 11 p.m. The moves were transmitted according to a prearranged code, and were received in the room of play by expert telegraph-operators. For the convenience of the crowd, the moves in the Pillsbury-Blackburne game were exhibited on a board, over seven feet across, placed on the floor; the pieces were proportionately large, and were moved about by a sort of pitchfork. This game, and that on Table No. 8, between E. M. Jackson and D. G. Baird (U.S.A.), were the only two of real interest, the others being either faulty or dull. In the end the score stood, America 4½, England 3½; so that Sir George Newnes' cup, a handsome trophy, worth about two hundred pounds, and a credit to the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths' Company, crosses the Atlantic. Towards the close of play, there was an irruption of the fair sex into the Pillar Room; they came fresh and flushed from a victory at the Metropolitan Chess Club, where fifty of them attacked and laid low as many gay gallants, to the tune of 25½ to 24½.

Switzerland, in order not to be behind-hand with the rest of the world, is going to have an Exhibition all to herself, and having for sole object the glorification of Swiss arts and crafts. This national fair will be inaugurated at Geneva on May 1, and so those who delight in such sights will be able to take the Helvetic Exhibition on their way to the Hungarian Millennial Celebrations. The most popular feature, according to those who have studied the plans prepared by those who have the important matter in hand, will undoubtedly be the miniature Swiss village, composed of the picturesque *châteaux* familiar to Alpine holiday-makers, and provided with a due assortment of shepherds and dairy-maids. This corner of the Exhibition will prove most attractive. I reproduce the curious device that is pasted like a stamp on letters connected with the Exhibition.



It seems remarkable that the image of the Queen engraved upon the postage-stamps of Great Britain and her Colonies should have remained the same throughout the fifty-eight years of her Majesty's reign, and that the portrait which appears upon the stamps of to-day should be, to all intents and purposes, identical with that which graced the first postage-label issued so long ago as 1840. It has occurred to the authorities of the Niger Coast

Protectorate to abandon the well-known girlish figure, and to decorate the set of stamps of six denominations, recently engraved for them by Messrs. Waterlow and Sons, with a portrait representing her Majesty as she appears to-day. The effect is decidedly pleasing, and, as examples of the engraver's art as applied to philately, the new labels are a distinct success. The example thus set has been speedily followed. Stamps of the values of two, three, and five rupees have within the last few months been added to the set now current in India, and in preparing the designs for these Messrs. De La Rue and Co. have followed Messrs. Waterlow and Sons in adopting an up-to-date likeness of her Majesty. It is said that the whole of the Indian set is to be called in, and reissued with a like portrait; and that, moreover, the majority of the Crown Colonies will follow suit. It is to be hoped, in the interests of Art, that the contemplated change will be made, and that shortly; for duller and more tasteless labels than those provided by certain of these Colonies never blotted the pages of the collector's album.



The New York *Post* heads an article on Cuba thus:—"Spain, the Toothless Old Wolf, Cannot Retain Her Single Remaining Cub—She Sits Helpless, Like Giant Despair, Watching the Procession of Republics."

"Breach of Promise Action. Amusing Correspondence." So ran the contents bill of an evening paper last week, and for certain unexpiated sins—imprudent investments in mines—I was compelled to purchase a copy. Stocks stood where they were. I turned to the "Amusing Correspondence," and felt very sorry for the poor fellow who was original author. What right have we of the Press to hold up to ridicule all the illiterate passion of unfortunate fellow-creatures. If one of us, a man of no education, deriving sentimentality from bad books, fervent newspapers, and indifferent plays, falls in love, is his plight any less pitiable because he cannot express himself in an ode worthy of Horace? Have we a right to bring his poor performances into the light of day and call them "Amusing Correspondence"? I think not. Such letters are written in a peculiar state of mind, and were never intended, after completion, for more than two eyes. This was the case of a man who, after some months' acquaintance with a girl, found out that she would not suit him as a wife. The girl alleged no injury other than this decision, and forthwith the poor defendant was compelled to submit to the ponderous humour of plaintiff's counsel, and finally to pay damages and costs. In addition, he was for some hours the sport of careless readers of the evening paper. When will the absurd Breach of Promise Laws be repealed.

Miss Maggie Davies is the young lady who is such a sprightly Kitty in "Shamus O'Brien," at the Opéra Comique Theatre, where she has made what is practically her stage début. Up to that time, her singing had been on the concert-platform and in oratorios. Dr. Stanford is a great friend of hers, and, as far back as last October, he said, "I am writing an opera which has a part that I have always thought of for you." Still, in spite of his offer and his constant advice to her to go on the stage, Miss Davies could not come to a decision, and was five weeks thinking it over. Then she went to see Sir Augustus Harris, and in about five minutes it was all settled, and she had made up her mind to accept the part. Her only previous experience of acting was when she played in opera as a student at the Royal College of Music. Since then, she has been singing in the provinces for about four years, and she is actually booked up to March 1897, among other things, for a Festival in June. Some of the people would not allow her to cancel her engagements. Only the other day she was obliged to miss two nights because of an arrangement of ten months' standing to sing at Sunderland. Miss Davies, who was born in Dowlais, where her parents now live, is uncertain as to her future movements.



MISS MAGGIE DAVIES.

Photo by Sellman and Co., Huddersfield.

I may fairly lay claim to some sporting proclivities. For cricket, rowing, tennis, shooting, and kindred sports I have a still large bump of veneration. When I get a good "tip," I will even speculate shekels of gold or shekels of silver, in accordance with the condition of the treasury. All this is as prelude to a protest against 'bus-racing, in which I take no interest. From about half-past eight to half-past ten at night, when most people are at home or in places of amusement, the traffic in main thoroughfares has usually dwindled down to small dimensions, and then the heart of the 'bus-driver rejoices, and he challenges all and sundry of his professional kith and kin to rival him in speed and recklessness. I fancy that in former states of existence most of our 'bus-drivers were Roman chariot-racers, and that near the witching hour of night something of the old spirit comes back to them.

A few nights back I took 'bus from King's Walk, Chelsea, to Piccadilly Circus. In my ignorance I embarked upon a "pirate." London Generals passed him with scorn, London Road-Cars treated him with contempt, until, at last, the blood of the "pirate" boiled, and he gave a silent but significant challenge to a Company 'bus-driver by rushing past him at a sharp corner. From Brompton to Hyde Park Corner we raced, regardless of results. Passengers hailed from the pavement, but in vain; an old lady lifted a fat umbrella in mute appeal as we galloped past. The "pirate" horses were lean and weary, but their load was light, while the well-kept gee-gees of the better-known rival had a heavy load to carry. As we took advantage of curves and corners the shaking was terrific, and several times it was difficult to keep in the seat. A halt, by mutual consent, took place at Hyde Park Corner, where timid passengers departed hastily, and down Piccadilly the contest was resumed. Just past the Bachelors' Club, the "pirate" took the wrong side of the road, because there were signs of congested traffic, and then I saw that there was a bit of a race coming the other way. Fortunately, the driver saw it too, and, with a really clever piece of dodging, he got to his proper side just opposite the house of the late Sir Julian Goldsmid. "Dun 'im," said the "pirate"-driver laconically, looking back for the white 'bus of superior pattern.

Miss Sarah Brooke is the talented young actress who has received so much praise from the London Press for her simple and sympathetic rendering of the part of Rose Gibbard in "Michael and his Lost Angel," at the Lyceum, and for her excellent diction in her present part of Anna in "For the Crown." Miss Brooke is an Anglo-Indian by birth, but of French origin, having some little Spanish blood in her veins, which probably accounts for the intensity of her acting, and her deep, beautiful colouring. She is also understudying the part of Militza, and, should she essay the rôle, her performance will be looked for with interest, for her charms are of the Gipsy type. Miss Brooke first went on the stage about two years ago, and studied very hard with Miss Sarah Thorne, under whose management she played such leading parts as Leah, Cynthia, Starlight Bess in "Flowers of the Forest," Constance Neville in "She Stoops to Conquer," &c. While with Miss Thorne she was seen by Mr. Thomas Thorne, who engaged her for a tour as his leading lady, to play the title-rôle in "Miss Tomboy," Mary Melrose in "Our Boys," &c., after which she at once entered upon her present engagement at the Lyceum.

During a most successful stock season of opera at one of the Boston theatres, a truly remarkable, and, as it turned out, exceedingly attractive "double bill" has been presented, its component parts being "H.M.S. Pinafore" and "Cavalleria Rusticana."

Of course, a double cast had to be arranged, the chief sopranos playing Josephine and Santuzza on alternate nights, and the leading tenors doing likewise with the parts of Turiddu and Ralph Rackstraw. That's what I call real versatility. Another interesting "double bill" has lately been



MISS SARAH BROOKE.

given nearer home by Mr. J. W. Turner's company, "Cavalleria" being followed by the second and third acts of "The Marriage of Figaro." The last decapitated item reminds one of a recent humorous suggestion that "The Huguenots," "Aida," and "Lucia" should strike against the shameful manner in which people nowadays rob them of their full complement of acts.

With regard to Mr. George Rignold, both he and his brother William are accomplished musicians as well as admirable actors, and in this connection I recall the story that when they "were boys together" they used to get up "all in the morn betimes" and play the violin sitting on a fence. This latter exploit was, of course, not accomplished in the Hosea Biglowan sense.

Miss Maxine Elliot and Mr. Frank Worthing, who played important parts over here with Mr. Augustin Daly last summer, have now, I note, joined a company just organised by Sydney Rosenfeld, to play his own drama with a familiar title, "A House of Cards," and an adaptation from the German, "The Two Escutcheons."

I saw a highly promising performance of Pauline in "The Lady of Lyons," the other day, given by Miss Anna Mather, a prepossessing and clever young actress, who was praised unanimously when she appeared in "The Merry Piper of Nuremberg," a couple of years back, at Mrs. Willard's matinée at the Savoy. She graduated with Miss Sarah Thorne. She has hereditary inclinations towards the entertainment professions, for her mother used to be a concert-singer, and her uncle was Behrens, the well-known operatic basso.



AS MISS TOMBOY.



AS LEAH.

Photographs by W. and D. Downey, Elbury Street, S.W.

THE NAVY ON THE STAGE.

In all sincerity, it may be suggested to the management of the New Olympic Theatre that, if "True Blue" fails to draw as a drama, the purely naval parts of it might be turned into a very successful pantomime—not, of course, Christmas pantomime, but dumb-show spectacle. Much of it was very taking. Personally, for humiliating reasons, I like to get my nautical knowledge second-hand, and there was a splendid opportunity of seeing our sailors afloat. The photographs that are given on the opposite page were really, in some respects, realised by the crowds of barefooted sailors, of engineers, stokers, marines, soldiers, middies, and officers. I missed the steward; but perhaps men-of-war do not carry the estimable gentlemen who serve in the hour of need, and change sovereigns for napoleons on the outward passage for the English, and napoleons for fifteen shillings when, five miles from Folkestone, the French seek English gold.

Really, the raising the anchor—a performance capitally stage-managed—the dance, the clothes-mending, and the stoking were very interesting; while people with keen ears found the task of trying to tell one word of command from another, and of distinguishing the meaning of bells, gongs, pipes, and whistles, as good as a game. The whole affair was minutely accurate, in the letter, and you could make a complete study of middle-class naval hierarchy. I have used the term, "in the letter," because one found in the actual play a somewhat daring disregard of probabilities. Naval commanders may sometimes be such bumptious prigs as Lieutenant Maitland, but it must happen rarely; while the introduction of such an absurd plot sadly affects the verisimilitude of the affair.

The irresistible idea of two acts at least was that the authors had intended to write a screaming farce, and changed their minds, without changing the subject. When handsome Mrs. Raleigh, who, as the female matador, looked superb and played excellently, gave a description of the process of boiling the heroine, the temptation to laugh was too strong. The idea of boiling is very awful; unfortunately, it has a flavour of the comic about it. The tale of the man who on his death-bed could not think of anything but the humiliating fact that he had been gored by a cow and not by a bull, came into my mind during the blood-curdling speech. You may try to kill your heroine by drowning, stabbing, poisoning, shooting, or even roasting, but not by boiling. It is true that one who posed as an authority said that the boiler of a cruiser is not a kind of gigantic kettle—is really an arrangement of metal tubes, into which the heroine could not get, arranged in a huge cylinder called a boiler, and that she would be baked, not boiled. The suggestion did not save the situation.

To criticise the piece would be useless, for it is but a hodge-podge of sensational incidents, presented artlessly and soured in a verbose dialogue. When the cutting has been done, the scenery got into complete working order, and the rehearsing is finished, "True Blue" should become a success. The company did all that was possible. Miss Laura Graves really charmed me: she is an actress who has almost always seemed better than her work, and I have wondered why some manager has not given a lady of her ability and grace a real chance. Miss Kate Phillips was very merry, and Mr. Charles Wibrow was cleverly amusing as her comic sweetheart. Mr. Edward O'Neill



MISS LAURA GRAVES, THE HEROINE OF "TRUE BLUE."

Photo by Hills and Saunders, Sloane Street, S.W.



"WAITING TO SEE 'THE PRISONER OF ZENDA,' AT THE ST. JAMES'S THEATRE.

Photo by Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.

was a remarkably good villain, Mr. Bucklaw handled the hero's part ably, and Mr. William Rignold acted well.

THEATRE NOTES.

"Shades of Night" has a value, if only that it procured for the critic a second visit to "For the Crown," a play of unusual pleasure and profit. The one-act piece introduces a new author, of such promise as to be welcome. He is not, perhaps, a born dramatist, and his making is far from finished; but there is sufficient life and brightness in the piece to render his handling of a fanciful theme not unattractive. It may be called somewhat German-Reedish in treatment, but some of the situations are clever, and the dialogue shows humour. The acting was good, particularly in the case of Miss Henrietta Watson.

The little bit of "Othello" that Mr. Tree gave at the Vezin benefit—which, I am glad to say, brought over three hundred pounds to its most deserving object—whets the appetite. So interesting was the Iago that one envies the country critics who have the whole to deal with, and not a mere sample. Criticism of the sample obviously would be useless, and to say that it confirms the *a priori* view, that Iago is a part in which Mr. Beer-bohm Tree would be able to use to full advantage his remarkable gifts, is almost to exhaust the subject.

IN THE REAL NAVY.

Photographs by Gregory, Strand.



THE CREW OF H.M.S. RESOLUTE.



TAILORING ON BOARD H.M.S. ROYAL SOVEREIGN.

A NOVEL IN A NUTSHELL.

DIES IRÆ.

BY LADY GREGORY.

Dr. Iron sat before his writing-table. It was afternoon, and his patients had one by one departed. The fog, which had hung over Harley Street all the morning, had now closed in more densely. The lamp-posts had become invisible, the area railings were fading into indistinctness, the sound of wheels grew rarer, and of shouts more frequent. The mist had crept into the study and slightly muffled the searching electric-light. The doctor was occupied, not with prescriptions or medical papers, but with bank-books, some circular notes, and a Continental Bradshaw. Presently he leaned back and watched the door, as if expecting someone to enter. Soon it opened gently, and his wife came in, a slight, tall woman, with tightly closed white lips, and a look of apprehension in her dark eyes.

"You sent for me, Luke?" she said with forced calm, while her husband politely stood up and offered her a chair. She continued standing, however, her hand resting on the table, while he, with a word of apology, sat down again, facing her.

"Yes," he replied, looking at her through his steel-rimmed spectacles. "It is a long time since we have had a conversation in this room; the last was—let me see," and he consulted the date marked on a folded document, "on this day, the 24th of January, ten years ago."

His wife's face grew whiter, her eyes larger and more scared, but she compressed her lips and did not answer.

"I am, as usual, anxious to save you trouble," her husband proceeded, in the same polite and measured voice, "and so I have made all arrangements for you. The carriage will be at the door at once, to take you to Charing Cross. As you have never expressed a desire for any particular place of residence, I thought you would perhaps like to give a trial to Brussels. It is cheerful, not expensive, and you will find quite an English colony. I have, therefore, taken a through ticket for you, and have ordered a room at the Hotel du Nord. As to means, there is, first, your own money—"

"Luke!"—the voice sounded hoarse and strained—"you are not really going to send me away?"

The doctor smiled patronisingly. "It is not a question of dismissal," he said; "it is merely the fulfilling of an agreement, and I trust you will carry it out in a business-like manner, and without discussion."

She had let go the table now, and sunk to the floor. "Luke," she cried again, "have pity on me!"

Dr. Iron unfolded the paper he had already consulted.

"Your memory may be a little at fault. Perhaps you would like to look over this. No? Then shall I save you the trouble and read it to you?"

A stifled groan from the woman at his feet was the only answer, and he proceeded: "'I, Margaret Iron, confess that a week ago, on Jan. 16, 1884, I left my home and husband in company with—'"

"Oh, don't read it! Don't let me hear it! Don't think I have forgotten it! I have seen every word before me day and night all these years!" she cried, her face covered with her hands.

"Then I need hardly remind you," continued her husband, in the same cold and measured tone, "that when, I having no desire for your return, you came back to me from your lover, and begged me to take you into my house again, I refused. That at last, at your earnest entreaty and on further consideration, I consented that, for the sake of my children—for I acknowledge them as mine—you should return and take charge of them during their childhood. I calculated that in ten years they would no longer need a nurse or governess—if you classify yourself under either name. As a mother, you were, I need hardly say, already lost to them. I judged, and judged rightly, that you would do your duty to them and to me as my paid assistant. Of course, we could never have met on any other terms. The children are now grown up. Alice is eighteen, and will find a chaperon in her aunt; Hubert is seventeen, and going to Cambridge. The term of our agreement ends to-day, and you are going, for the moment, to Brussels. You will have a sufficient income, and all countries except England will be free to you. It is a matter of business, not of sentiment."

Margaret Iron lifted her head. Her tears had ceased, but her face looked more deadly white than before in the increasing gloom.

"Luke," she said steadily and pleadingly, "it is all true. I confessed it long ago. I was not worthy to come back to you or to my children. I blessed you, and I thank and bless you still, for these years of grace you have given me. But have I earned no forgiveness in all this time? Have I ever deserved a hard word from you? I say nothing of my care of the children—they are my life. But you know that I have taught them to love and reverence you, puzzled as they have been by your coldness to me. Have I not devoted myself to your interests, worked hard for your comfort, been bright and cordial to your guests and friends, while my heart was breaking? You say I was paid, but you know I never touched your money. It lay as you lodged it year after year; you can take it back to-morrow. You think the children don't want me any more, but this is the age at which they most want a mother. Oh, don't smile in that bitter way! Is there anything in me now to contaminate them? My sin was great, but I have greatly repented, and the record of these ten years might well cover that one short week."

The doctor had been making a note in the railway-guide before him, and carefully wiped his pen before laying it down.

"My dear Margaret," he said, "I was quite aware, when I drew up and allowed you to sign that agreement, that this scene was already prepared in your mind. You trusted to time, to my weakness, to your superior strength of will, to regain your former place. You thought, as I had yielded once, so I would do again. For that very reason, I will not be moved now. I should not respect myself as a man if I could let a resolve of so many years be set aside by a peal of words or a storm of tears. They do not touch me. I have found your presence in the house a convenience to me. It would continue to be a convenience to me, but it would also be a living sign of my weakness. I should have been vanquished by you; I should dislike you. I do not dislike you now, I am only indifferent to you. Would it not be well to have your things put up, and have you not some orders to give or arrangements to make? The children are out for the day; would it not be well for you to leave before their return?"

The doctor was getting up, but his wife flung herself at his feet, and clasped his knees.

"Oh!" she cried, "will nothing move you? Is there nothing I can say to soften you? Is there no penance you can give me to do, no suffering you can give me to bear, that will make my very presence, a sign to you of your power over me? Does the shame and the pain of all these years count for nothing? Do you know what the misery has been when the children clung to me, when your friends made much of me, and I knew that your eye was upon me seeing the stain all the time? Do you know what the terrible loneliness of these years has been? Cut quite away by the consciousness of my sin from fellowship with all good men, and not only from them, but from all the dead I have lost. Their eyes look at me as I lie awake at night; and reproach me with my guilt. There will be no rest in the grave for me; they will be there. God will judge me, and I fear Him less than I do man, and yet his face is hidden from me. I have prayed often, often for my children, because in time of anxiety one must pray or die, but never for myself. Heaven and earth, if I am sent away from my darlings, are alike empty to me!" She was sobbing again, and loosed her husband's knees. He went over to the bell-knob.

"I am going to ring," he said coldly; "perhaps you had better leave the room before the bell is answered."

She stood up and stopped him now with an imperious gesture. "You have the right to send me from your house," she said, "but I claim the right of leaving it in my own way. Oh! I will go surely and quietly enough, and never to return. I knew this might come, and I have made preparation for it. These last weeks, when pain of body has tortured me as well as pain of mind, I have made a great show of relieving it with morphia. Let me, for this night only, sleep in your house, and I promise you I will never awake in it. Or, if you shrink from death so near, if you are afraid of any suspicion or scandal, let me go away as for a visit, and from that visit there will be no return, and no message from me will trouble you. But, then, my children need never know. They will fret for me for a time, but while they live they will think of me as good and innocent. It is only if they meet me after death that they will see me soiled, as you see me, as I see myself."

Dr. Iron looked, for the first time, a little interested. "It is not a bad idea," he said; "but I wish you had mentioned it sooner. I told the children in full—in fact, I showed them your written confession and agreement, before they went to their party."

His wife, looking down upon him, grasped his shoulder. "You treacherous man!" she cried passionately. "You had not the right to speak to them without my knowledge and without giving me the chance of escape I have asked for. If I had thought you were so cruel and so cowardly as this, I would have killed you. It would have been better for me to have had a second stain on my soul than to leave my darlings in your hands. They must now, poor, innocent children! hold me in horror; but, mark my words, they will hold you in hate. I never made an excuse for myself before. I despise the plea of madness. I was not mad; I think now I was wise. I think now it was what was good in me that shrank from all that was bad in you and made me throw myself on another. I would to God I had stayed with him! I would I had taken my children with me, and gone out in the wide world with him and them. I am glad I gave myself to him; it is the week of my married life that redeems the rest. You need despise me no longer. Take back your contempt! I despise you!"

She flung him from her, and walked out of the room. In the hall were her children; they had just let themselves in, the cold, dark fog entering with them. She shivered and drew back. "Alice," she whispered timidly. But the girl drew back, and the dim lamplight showed the shrinking horror in her merciless young eyes. Her mother laughed bitterly. "Yes, you are right; cast the first stone at me," she said. "No, not the first, your father has done that." At the mention of her father the girl shuddered again, but made no movement. Her mother took a cloak that lay on a chair and wrapped it round her with hurried, trembling hands. "It is enough," she said; "it is all over; I am going." But, as she tried to unfasten the door, her son flung his arms round her, sobbing.

"Mother," he said, "I will go with you. I cannot give you up; I will never leave you."

She unfolded his arms, and kissed him again and again, but then pushed him gently from her, and in a moment had gone out, alone and silently, into the darkness.

THE ART OF THE DAY.



STATUE OF SHAKSPERE.—FREDERIC McMONNIES.
FOR THE NATIONAL LIBRARY AT WASHINGTON. AFTER THE DROESHOUT PORTRAIT.

ART NOTES.

It has been understood for some time past that the artists of Glasgow and the West of Scotland have been maturing a scheme by which they may be brought into closer ties of artistic brotherhood, and may



THE FIRST DIP.—JAMES HAYLLAR.

Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Henry Graves and Co., Pall Mall.

eventually—who knows?—develop into all the completeness of a school. The scheme, during its ripening days, was kept darkly, with more than Scottish reticence, and it has been only during the last few days that it has been unfolded to the public.

Mr. A. K. Brown, A.R.S.A., who has been intimately associated with the new movement, has allowed himself to be interviewed on the subject, and has, with some precision, indicated its avowed aim. First and foremost, the new society, whatever it may be, has no intention of "anything so absurd and unfair" as to raise any opposition to the Fine Art Institute or to the Art Club. "We owe," said Mr. Brown, "too much to both, and value them too much, to initiate any movement which is likely in the slightest degree to prejudice their interests." Curiously enough, Mr. Brown, a little later in the conversation, admitted that "our new movement may lead ultimately to the cessation of the Art Club Exhibition," on the ground that most artists belonging to that Club will say, "A good job too, if you give us something better."

At present the new society has no name. A recent meeting was held, under the presidency of Mr. James Guthrie, and a managing committee was formed, composed of Sir F. Powell, Messrs. James Guthrie, R. C. Crawford, Wellwood Rattray, George Pirie, A. K. Brown, and Tom McEwan. Mr. Guthrie becomes chairman, and Mr. Brown secretary and treasurer. The "one and only" aim of the society is to promote exhibitions of the work of local painters. Mr. Brown was asked "upon what principle the committee was chosen," and it was delicately insinuated that outsiders might suggest that they were self-elected, and were seeking to form a close corporation. To this Mr. Brown very frankly replied, "We are self-elected. How could it be otherwise?" Which, when you come to think of it, is the only possible answer. The new society, therefore, enters upon its career with good hope; they will try to fuse all that is best in local schools; but we greatly suspect that the fusion will result in the founding of a new local "school" altogether; for such is the way of art.

To return for a moment to further details of the work now hanging at the Institute, we must not pass by Mr. Grègory's extremely clever work, although its cleverness is often a little overclouded by crude and disagreeable colour. His portrait of "Master Newall," if it were not for this defect, would be a small triumph of vitality and spring. Mr. Dollman sends a very pretty cat subject, Mr. Edwin Hayes' "North Sea Trawlers" moves with nature, Mr. Rheam is extremely ornamental in "Ivory Gate and Golden," and we must also chronicle Professor von Bartels' extremely fine "Fish Market on the Dutch Coast." The Professor is so well known in Munich that to mention him needs no apology.

We have mentioned already the President's work, which this year is quite equal to his former reputation. He has three Shakspeare subjects, "Jessica," "Sweet Anne Page," and "Katharine and Petruchio," and once more pleases by his splendid technique, his decorative point of view. Mr. Arthur Severn is always pretty, and his "Sunset at Kynance Cove" is, perhaps, even a little more than this; so also is Mr. Edgar Bundy, whose little nude boys playing with chestnuts is a charming scheme of colour, and is drawn deftly and with delicate skill.

We reproduce this week the statue of Shakspeare, sculptured by Mr. Frederic McMonnies after the Droeshout portrait, and destined for the National Library at Washington. The work, though unlike the most popular conception of Shakspeare, is full of strength and interest. We also reproduce Millais' very fine illustration from the "Breath from the Veldt"—"The Last Trek"—a composition full of fine and true emotion, and Hayllar's "The First Dip," a charming picture of a tender and timid child coming forth for its first sea-bath.

The London Stereoscopic and Photographic Company have issued a twenty-fourth edition of their popular guide-book for amateur photographers, "The A B C of Photography." The first edition appeared in time to instruct the amateur to fix for us, by his clumsy, slow process of "wet plates," those quaint photographs of chignonned, crinolined, and tight-sleeved ladies. The chignon, the tight sleeves, even the crinoline, may all come back again, but the blackened fingers and the wet plates have vanished for ever, being completely ousted by the cleanly and convenient dry plates and films. The simplification and improvement of the technique has led to the extraordinary development of photography among amateurs during this decade; for every one that required the assistance of the first edition of this book there are now five hundred to require the guidance of the twenty-fourth.



THE LAST TREK.—SIR JOHN E. MILLAIS, BART., P.R.A.

Frontispiece to "A Breath from the Veldt." By John Guille Millais, F.Z.S. (H. Sotheran and Co.)

"THE AMERICAN DU MAURIER."

With whatever reason or justice, that exceedingly clever American artist, Mr. C. D. Gibson, has been nicknamed "the American Du Maurier." The artistic manner, however, of the two men is so markedly diverse that, if a broad basis of social satire be granted as the common subject of black-and-white art to both draughtsmen, this is about as much as a discerning critic may allow in this matter of similarity or like excellence.

He is staying at the Albany, like Mr. John Lane, who has just published in this country an admirable album of his work, and it was there he received a representative of *The Sketch*.

Mr. Gibson (he writes) received me with what must be considered a customary kindness, and showed himself at once prepared to hear and answer any discreet question that might be asked him.

"You are in England for some time?" I inquired.

"Not for long," he replied, "although I am in no frantic hurry to depart. My impression is that I shall stay in London until about July, when I return to the States."

"You have been in London before, I presume?"

"Only once before," he answered, "and then only for a month. In fact, I could do no more than get a flight of impressions on the occasion of the former visit, and no really solid point of view. For practical purposes, this is my first visit to London, and I mean to do it thoroughly."

"And you like London?"

"I like it exceedingly. I like the people, of course; but, more than anything, I am, in the most ordinary way imaginable, impressed by the sense of its size and power. There is no city like it in the world."

"But may I ask your particular business here?"

"You may. It is to study the streets, the life of London in the open air, its types, its endless types of humanity, under innumerable circumstances of pleasure, of embarrassment, and of the various emotions which can be seen here in so great an abundance, that I purpose to stay here for six months or so."

"And your sole medium in art is black-and-white?"

"My sole medium. I began to work for *Life* when I was eighteen—"

"And you are now —?"

"Twenty-eight. I had my training at the Art Students' League, which is reckoned to be about the best art school of New York. As I told you, my first drawing for *Life* was done ten years ago, and since then I have got through an enormous amount of work."

"You work hard?"

"When I begin I work at exceedingly high pressure, without stopping until I have done all that there is within me to do. Then I rest, for three months, sometimes, at a stretch. Last year, for example, I did no actual work from July to October."

"What is your opinion," I interposed, "of the work of Caran d'Ache?"

"Why should I have an opinion," he asked, a trifle surprised, "upon the work of Caran d'Ache?"

"Because I hear," I answered, "that he ranks you first among living black-and-white artists."

"In that case," he readily replied, "politeness compels me to say that Caran d'Ache is the first of living black-and-white artists."

"And Phil May?"

"Phil May is, of course, the first of living black-and-white artists," he returned, with but a shadow of a smile.

"But you sincerely admire him?"

"I admire him extremely; not only for his technique, which is, of course, of the highest value, but also for the humanity of the sentiment which pervades all his work. To me," he continued, "this is the one thing in art which attracts me. I fear that I carry that feeling so far as to admire very little either in books or in art which is distinguished by nothing but exquisite technique."

He pointed to some reproductions of the Marcus Stone order of work hanging on the walls of his chambers.

"That kind of thing," he said, "is all very well, from my point of view: but it does not personally interest me."

"Lord Leighton, for example?" I asked.

"Of course, I admit that Lord Leighton's style was immense. But I do not find a personal pleasure in style for its own sake. 'Persephone Returning to the Earth,' a naked young person posing on the edge of a bath—works of this kind do not give me the peculiar thrill which it appears to me to be the function of pictorial art to give."

I confess that I was unwilling to pursue a subject which, in its logical sequence, would set Mr. Caton Woodville and Mr. Paul Renouard higher in the rolls of art than Corot or Botticelli, a conclusion, however, which I am sure Mr. Gibson would hesitate to draw, despite all the logic in the world. I asked him, therefore, concerning the subjects of his black-and-white drawings.

"Do you, like Du Maurier, select your own subjects invariably, or do you sometimes, like Charles Keene, 'draw up' to some chosen text?"

"I always choose my own subjects," he said. "And my method is, first of all, to draw a figure in some vital attitude. I leave it, perhaps, for a day, perhaps for three weeks, in my sketch-book. If the figure is really alive, it will always contain the elements of some human situation, humorous, suggestive, satirical, or sentimental, and I develop that situation out of those elements. If the figure, or whatever it may be, suggests nothing alive, I throw it on one side. For any purpose of mine it is dead."

"Are you satisfied," I asked, "with the accuracy of reproduction in the printing of your work, say, in *Life*, the chief paper for which you work?"

I ask, because it is a well-known fact that Mr. Du Maurier has complained bitterly of the reproductions of his drawings in *Punch*; and I am bound to say that his complaint was justified when he recently permitted us to see the originals at the Fine Art Society's rooms."

"Was it so?" answered Mr. Gibson. "For my part, I have no complaint of the kind to make; but I can readily understand the complaint of an artist whose work is reproduced by so barbarous a method as by wood-engraving. Surely, even an old-fashioned paper should be abreast of the times in this matter of reproduction. Wood-engraving, for journalistic purposes, takes one back into the dark ages of art."

I rose to leave, expressing a hope that he would find nothing in his published words as recorded by myself to which he could take exception.

"I am sure there will be nothing," he said, laughing, as he shook hands; "you seem to do these things more quietly over here than in my country. I fear our native journalists think too much of sensation."

And with that I left.

WHITE SLAVES.

Probably no stretch of an author's imagination could possibly present to the world anything more tragic than fact. In the columns of a provincial paper (writes a correspondent) I find notices far more interesting than any article—applications suggestive of white slavery, of the efforts that our less fortunate brothers and sisters will make to keep up the appearance of gentility. As I read through two long columns, I was moved to feelings of sympathy that the noisier and more blatant tragedies of existence fail to rouse in me. An epidemic, an accident in colliery or at sea, these things cry aloud for our compassion and assistance; but what about the silent cry of shabby gentility? I will quote one or two of those advertisements, and give them a publicity larger than they were ever expected to obtain. "Young widow lady," runs one, "who has been trained by good London masters, will give instruction in piano-playing. Weekly lessons, one hour. Terms, four-and-sixpence per quarter." At this exorbitant rate, what luxuries must be in store for the young widowed lady; and if the good London masters have given her good instruction and she has a taste for music, how delightful it will be to teach the rough, uneducated Black Country children and train their thick, jointless fingers! Lower down, in the same column, two spinster ladies advertise their children's school, where the hours are from nine in the morning until four in the afternoon, and the charge, inclusive of lessons in drawing and piano-playing, is one shilling per week. Below this advertisement come several offers from people of alleged education to act as companion, governess, or nurse, in exchange for a comfortable home; and that grimy suburb is, apparently, full of expert needlewomen who will sell their services for next to nothing, of handy men requiring any employment, of decayed musicians—past members of good orchestras—who will teach the violin, flute, and cornet, of others who will teach drawing or painting.



MR. C. D. GIBSON.

Photo by J. D. Willis.



MISS LENA ASHWELL, WHO IS TO BE MARRIED TO-MORROW TO MR. ARTHUR PLAYFAIR.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED ELLIS, UPPER BAKER STREET, N.W.

MISS LENA ASHWELL AND MR. A. PLAYFAIR.

Marriages of stage folk are in the air, and to-morrow Miss Lena Ashwell is to be married to Mr. Arthur Playfair. Thursday, indeed, seems to be the favourite wedding-day in the profession, for it was on that day that

Miss Decima Moore and Miss Hall Caine—to note the most recent theatrical marriages—went to church.

Miss Lena Ashwell was born on the high seas. Her father is Commander C. A. B. Pocock, though on leaving the Navy he took Holy Orders. She spent much of her girlhood abroad, and then entered the Royal Academy of Music, where she attracted the attention of Miss Ellen Terry, who strongly advised her to go on the stage. She made her

début in "The Pharisee" when it was mounted at the Grand Theatre, Islington. This was exactly five years ago. But her first important piece of work was done in connection with Mr. Alexander's touring company in "Lady Windermere's Fan." Miss Ashwell understudied Miss Winifred Emery in "Sowing the Wind," at the Comedy, and played Pauline when "Frou-Frou" was produced at the same theatre, was Lady Pamela in "Dick Sheridan," and made a hit in "Marriage," at the Court. When "King Arthur" was produced at the Lyceum last year, her Elaine attracted much attention, not only because of the excellent acting, but owing to the fact that she looked the part as probably no other actress then on the English stage could have done. Miss Ashwell more lately played Nellie Morris in "The Prude's Progress." She joined Mr. Charles Cartwright at the Duke of York's Theatre, and played admirably in "Her Advocate" and "The Fool of the Family."

Mr. Arthur Playfair is the youngest son of Major-General A. L. Playfair, of the Indian Army, who is a cousin of Lord Playfair. He started his theatrical career, which has been an unusually busy one, on August Bank Holiday, 1887, as Mr. Chapstone, Q.C., with Mr. Balsir Chatterton's Company in "Jim the Penman," and, after a few weeks, he was promoted to the more important rôle of Captain Redwood, which Mr. Brookfield used to play so effectively.

In December he went to the Opéra Comique with Mrs. Bernard Beere, appearing as the butler in "As in a Looking-Glass," the landlord in "Ariane," and Burdock in "Masks and Faces." During this engagement Mr. Playfair played the part of Lord Penrhyn in "A Silent Shore" at a matinée at the Olympic Theatre. In July 1880 he toured with Mr. Charles Terry's Comedy Company, as Cecil in "Barbara," and Edward Fairleigh in "Hook and Eye"; and then joined the Kendals in the provinces, playing various parts in their repertoire, besides creating the excellent part of the Hon. George Liptrott in "The Weaker Sex." After this he appeared as Marshall in Mr. Tree's provincial company in "Captain Swift." Then he came back to town, figuring as the foreman of the jury in "Aunt Jack," at the Court Theatre, following this by touring for a month as Captain Morton in "Union Jack." Melodrama further claimed him in "A Man's Shadow," in which he doubled the parts of the Judge and Lacroix (the detective). He then went to Mr. Wyndham, at the Criterion, appearing as Sir Harry Bumper in "The School for Scandal," and

engaged him to burlesque Mr. Tree as the Duke of Gooseberry in "The Prancing Girl," at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, a performance that all who saw it will not readily forget. The ever-watchful Mr. Gilbert at this point cast his eye on the young actor, of whom he is a great admirer, and booked him to create the rôle of Giorgio in "The Mountebanks," at the Lyric Theatre, after which he played Mr. Frank Wyatt's and Mr. Harry Monkhouse's parts on various occasions, eventually taking the former's place. Such a capital burlesque actor naturally drifted Gaietywards, so he appeared in "Cinder-ElLEN," with his imitations of actors, and after Fred Leslie died he stayed on to understudy Mr. Arthur Roberts in "In Town." Indeed, on the very first Saturday he had the good luck to play the capital part of Captain Coddington, and appeared in it during eight nights. He then left the Gaiety, to appear to burlesque Mr. Wyndham as Lord Charles Wyndamere in "The Bauble Shop," while, as the theatrical manager in "Nitouche," he mimicked most excellently Mr. George Edwardes. His next new part was that of General Jenkinson in "A Modern Don Quixote," at the Strand, after which he joined Mr. Hawtrey as Harry in "Tom, Dick, and Harry," at the Trafalgar. He stayed there to create the part of Sir Rheddan Tapeleigh in "Go Bang." Then came the greatest hit of his career, when he rejoined Mr. Gilbert at the Lyric, to create the part of the dancing corporal in "His Excellency." That was really an excellent bit of fooling, Mr. Playfair singing, dancing—who can forget his ballet steps?—and acting with the greatest gusto. After this he appeared as Theodore Travers in "The Prude's Progress," at the Comedy Theatre, where, it will be remembered, Miss Ashwell also had a part. He played Major O'Gallagher in "The Strange Adventures of Miss Brown" for close on two hundred nights, and has remained at Terry's, where he figures as Tom Bellaby in "Jedbury Junior."

Mr. Playfair inherits his theatrical instincts from his grandfather, Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair. The latter is generally known to fame as a brilliant artillery officer in India, and a great benefactor of the town of St. Andrews, where his father had been Principal of the University, and where he was born in 1789. In a little-known memoir of Sir Hugh, which was written by his son, Major-General A. L. Playfair, the father of the actor, mention is made of the fact that Sir Hugh founded a regimental theatre at Dum-Dum, near Calcutta, where first he landed in 1805. On his return home in 1834, he took up his abode at St. Andrews, of which he was made Provost in 1842. The great improvements he effected in the town on every conceivable side of civil and university life, how he popularised golf, and how he was one of the leading figures in St. Andrews to the day of his death, in 1861—all that is a matter of history. But it is not so well known that his strong theatrical instincts, shared by his two brothers, led him to erect a private theatre on his estate, St. Leonards, where he had built a very wonderful house on the site of an old Priory, which would simply have delighted a writer of a *World* Celebrity at Home. It was crammed full of the most marvellous curiosities and nicknacks, intended to instruct and to amuse his family. On a garden-paling, for instance, he himself painted the chronology of the world, in the ratio of an inch to every year. The ancient mill-race of the Priory ran through the garden, and the water was made to perform all sorts of wonderful things in its career. There was a Chinese bridge across it, with a number of tiny animals and human beings thronging in all directions. There were waterworks, a hydraulic ram, a wind-gauge, and all sorts of philosophical instruments, contained in a pagoda, in which a Chinese Emperor swung about, in obedience to every passing breeze, while a revolving wheel, fitted up with obliquely arranged mirrors, cast a reflection on all the surrounding objects. There was a pavilion, containing a little puppet-theatre, and an organ, all of which could be put in motion by a water-wheel sunk into the mill-course, the mechanism, to all appearance, being driven by a man toiling at a windlass. Sir Hugh was a humorist, you see, which may account for his grandson's keen sense of burlesque.

But to return to the theatre. Here the Indian veteran constantly used to act. He was excellent as Bailie Nicol Jarvie, and he made a capital Falstaff. Indeed, though the fact is not generally known, it was he who inspired Mr. Charles Wyndham to go on the stage. The present lessee of the Criterion was at school in St. Andrews with the General's boys, and often used to go to Sir Hugh's theatre—which, by the way, is now converted into the well-known Ladies' School of St. Leonards. Major-General Playfair, too, has strong theatrical leanings, as his enthusiastic advocacy of the Siddons House scheme would amply show. With such a pedigree, it is little wonder that Mr. Arthur Playfair took to the stage as a duck takes to water. If talent and genuine enthusiasm go for anything, both he and Miss Ashwell ought to succeed.

Rev^d C. A. B. Pocock, (Commander R.N.)
requests the pleasure of the company of

Mr.

on the occasion of the Marriage of his daughter
Lena Ashwell

to

Arthur Wyndham Playfair,

at 36, Bedford Court Mansions, Bedford Square,
on Thursday, March 26th, from 2.30 to 5 p.m.



MR. PLAYFAIR IN "HIS EXCELLENCY."
Photo by Hills and Saunders, Sloane Street, S.W.

understudying many different parts. After that he tried his hand at the music-halls, with a sketch called "Round the Theatres." Here it was that he made his great hit as a mimic—for he can imitate twenty-six players. So successful was he that Mr. Sedger



MR. ARTHUR PLAYFAIR.
Photo by A. Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.

THE BOOK AND ITS STORY.

A VINDICATION OF SWIFT.*

It takes an Irishman to understand Swift. His own countrymen cannot be said to cherish his memory. They regard him as a desperately bad man, who cloaked atheism with holy orders, sold himself to each political party in turn in his reckless pursuit of a bishopric, as a bully to women, and a coward to men, as the genius who wrote Gulliver, and the monster who hated the human race. Roughly speaking, that is the common view of Swift, sustained by such eminent authorities as Johnson, Macaulay, and Thackeray. Sir Walter Scott, as Mr. Ashe King admits, did his best to relieve Swift from one imputation by showing that, so far from being a political trimmer and renegade, he was absolutely consistent in his devotion to the Whig Revolution and the Tory Church. He never intrigued with the Jacobites, but he would stand no measures which threatened the supremacy of the Church of England. Toleration of Dissent was, to his intolerant mind, an unpardonable crime; and when his friends the Whigs sought, as he thought, to sap the Episcopalian citadel, he quitted them at the height of their power. That a Church, purely on its secular side, should have been a fetish to the man who personified human nature in the Yahoo may seem incongruous; but there can be no reasonable doubt that Swift acted in this matter on his honest convictions. But although Mr. Ashe King's vindication of him on this issue is admirably cogent, it is not this part of Swift's career which is most interesting; nor is it here that his Irish biographer renders his memory the greatest service. What Swift did for Ireland is, to Mr. Ashe King, the keynote of his character. A consuming hatred of injustice—the *sæva indignatio* of the inscription on his tomb—inspired the "Drapier Letters," and those remarkable expositions of the state of Ireland which Swift addressed in vain to Walpole. Here was an Englishman who, although he regarded the native Irish with contempt, identified himself with the true interests of their country. It was as the champion of the Irish-born English "colonists" that he drew those appalling pictures of English misgovernment. The policy which he combated ruined Irish manufactures, plunged the peasantry into savagery, and drove the "colonists" to England by importing Englishmen to draw the salaries of the Irish Administration. Hence, the original absentee landlords were men who, like Swift, were English by blood, and English in general politics, but prevented from governing their adopted country in accord with local interests and a reasonable independence by the insensate statesmanship which treated Ireland as a market of sinecures for Walpole's needy and troublesome hangers-on.

This is not the chief personal interest of Mr. Ashe King's remarkable little book, but it serves him with striking illustrations of his argument that Swift's brutality, which has revolted so many, was due partly to a kind of inverted humanity, and partly to the mental disorder which threatened him long, and crushed him at last. It is to no deep-seated malignity that we must attribute the treatment of Stella. How could a man who was always under the shadow of an awful malady enter into all the tender relations and responsibilities of domestic life? It was not, as Thackeray supposed, hatred of children which prompted Swift to write the "Modest Proposal" that the Irish poor should eat their superfluous infants. Mr. Ashe King ascribes this to Swift's despair over the frightful condition of the country, whose cause he had maintained single-handed against the ignorance, indifference, and stupidity of English statesmen. "The paper, in truth, is the literary analogue of the kind of despairing pity which makes a mother, mad with misery, drown her child to save it from a life of horror. Those who can see in the act of such a mother insane hate, and not insane love

of her child, are as wise and sympathetic as those who can see in 'A Modest Proposal' callous insensibility to the suffering of which it shows a maddened and despairing sensitiveness." "As to myself," wrote Swift, "having been wearied out for years with offering vain, idle, visionary thoughts, at length, utterly despairing of success, I fortunately fell upon this proposal; which, as it is wholly new, so it has something solid and real, of no expense and little trouble, full in our own power, and whereby we can incur no danger of disobliging England." It is plain, as Mr. Ashe King says, that this terrible satire was "inspired by *sæva indignatio*, by an insupportable sense of the miseries of the poor Irish taking the usual turn in such a nature as Swift's of fell hate and scorn of their oppressors." This view did not occur to Thackeray, whose judgment of Swift was lamentably mistaken, though many passages in his own writings, which are cited to prove that he, too, was a brutal cynic, sprang from the frenzy of pity which,

in Swift's case, was whipped to extravagance by ever-brooding insanity. The native tenderness that underlay the great Dean's ferocity is attested by many witnesses. What friend that he ever had reproached him with neglect or desertion? Addison, Pope, Harley, Bolingbroke, he was staunch to them all. It was when Bolingbroke was in the Tower that Swift gave the strongest proof of his attachment. Addison, not an emotional person, grew enthusiastic when he wrote of Swift. A poor man in a very corrupt age, Swift had absolutely clean hands, though, at one time, he was the most powerful man in England, directed her policy, and, had he loved money, could have had it in plenty. He denied himself luxuries that he might provide a fund out of which he advanced loans to needy Irish tradesmen, on a principle which combined generosity with rational thrift. To many a call for help his scanty purse made an unconditional response. And yet the misunderstanding of his nature is so profound that the most ordinary human impulses are denied to him. Even the "Journal to Stella" is grudgingly accounted to him for sincerity, and his pathetic bequest for an Irish lunatic asylum—

To show by one satiric touch,
No nation needed it so much—

has been treated simply as a sardonic jest.

When the printer of the "Drapier Letters" was thrown into prison, Swift made no secret of the authorship; at any rate, he acted in a manner which

would have given the Government an opportunity, had they been minded, to prosecute their most formidable enemy in Ireland. Mr. Ashe King tells the story of Swift's butler, who had copied the famous "Letters" for the printer, and who was summarily dismissed for having absented himself from the Deanery one evening without leave. Critics who question Swift's courage might be asked what they make of this deliberate provocation to a dangerous witness. The butler did not turn informer, and he was reinstated later with this introduction to the other servants, "This is no longer your fellow servant, Robert, the butler, but Mr. Blakeley, verger of St. Patrick's, a post which his integrity has obtained him." No one served Swift, indeed, without loving him. There is the delightful story of the maid-servant to whom he gave a guinea to buy a gown of Irish stuff. When he saw her in her old dress, he scolded her. "She hurried from the room without a word, to return presently with her arms full of books. 'Here, please, your reverence, is the Irish stuff I have bought with your guinea, and better was never manufactured.'" They were his own works. Who can wonder that the Irish are still paying their debt of gratitude to this great writer? And English readers owe a debt to Mr. Ashe King for a most persuasive, eloquent, and luminous book, which gives Swift his true position in English history and English literature, and shows his misanthropy to be "a disease claiming pity and not *lèse-majesté* against human nature, deserving vindictive reprobation." His hate was the abstract "hate of man, not of men, and its concrete form was the noblest which hatred can assume—rage against injustice and oppression."—A.



MR. R. ASHE KING.

Photo by Russell, Baker Street, W.

* "Swift in Ireland." By Richard Ashe King, M.A. London: T. Fisher Unwin.

"FOR THE CROWN," AT THE LYCEUM.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MESSRS. W. AND D. DOWNEY, FETTER STREET, S.W.



MISS WINIFRED EMERY AS BASILIDE.

*"I am a woman and a Greek;
And one day all who cross my path repent."*



BAZILIDE.

“FOR THE CROWN,” AT THE LYCEUM.

Mr. Forbes-Robertson has found his luck again in Mr. John Davidson's adaptation of Coppée's play, "For the Crown." In New York the drama, Englished by Mr. Charles Renault, proved about as successful at Palmer's Theatre as did poor "Michael and his Lost Angel." The Lyceum production could hardly have failed. Few plays have in recent years been more elaborately mounted, and Mr. Forbes-Robertson has rarely had a more effective part than that of Constantine Brancomir. Then the play witnessed the return of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, and welcomed back to the Lyceum Miss Winifred Emery. Indeed, the cast, which is herewith given, is well-balanced, Mr. Charles Dalton proving an admirable selection.

Stephen	Mr. IAN ROBERTSON.
Prince Michael Brancomir ...	Mr. CHARLES DALTON.
Constantine Brancomir...	Mr. FORBES-ROBERTSON.
Ibrahim	Mr. MACKINTOSH.
Lazare	Mr. FRANK GILLMORE.
Ourosch	Mr. J. FISHER WHITE.
A Turkish Prisoner	Mr. J. CULVER.
A Sentinel	Mr. J. WILLES.
A Goatherd	Mr. MURRAY HATHORN.
A Page	Miss DORA BARTON.
Bazilide	Miss WINIFRED EMERY.
Anna	Miss SARAH BROOKE.
Militza	Mrs. PATRICK CAMPBELL.

The play seems to have settled down to run. Nobody with an eye for the picturesque and an ear for resonant lines will fail to see "For the Crown."



“Kindle the beacon.”

CONSTANTINE (MR. FORBES-ROBERTSON).



“Let the Balkans blaze.”



MR. CHARLES DALTON AS PRINCE MICHAEL.

*"For twelve long years at arm's length have I held
Crescent horse-tail standard—patiently!"*



*"Have I, alas! done well to spare your life?"
"I fear not death."*



*"I bring you these, my lord, seeing you sad . . .
Flowers help my sorrow, so I bring you flowers."*



*"If we might live and love a little while,
Look on each other tenderly; and speak
Things deeply thought, and be compassionate."*



*"With this baptismal shower I wed your soul—
The pitying flowers you brought me, and the flowers
That tell the aching passion of my heart."*



MR. IAN ROBERTSON AS THE BISHOP-KING OF THE BALKANS.

*"We must be all one heart, one mind, one arm,
We must smite the enemy of Christendom!"*



CONSTANTINE.

*"The Cross has fallen! How could I dream or hope,
Mad as I was, to conquer wrong by wrong?"*



CONSTANTINE.

*"What fiends hiss at my ear like summer flies,
'Parricide! Parricide!'"*



PRINCE MICHAEL AND BAZILIDE.

*"Before me out of vacancy there dawns
A diadem where'er I fix my gaze,
My head aches for it!"*



MILITZA.

*"Then he forsook her one sad morn;
She wept and sobbed, 'O love, come back!'
There only came to her forlorn,
Butterflies all black."*



MILITZA TAKING CONSTANTINE'S DAGGER.

*"Give me a pledge,
Something of yours to carry next my heart.
It is the Gipsy custom."*

One of the most remarkable features of the Lyceum production is the lovely scenery and setting, and not the least imposing part of it is the equestrian statue in the last act, to which Constantine is bound. It is the work of Mr. Andrea C. Lucchesi. The statue is hardly less wonderful than the one in "Harry Richmond" or the horse of Troy. It is wonderfully made, for it had to be completed within three weeks. There are irons in the legs, while the man and the horse's head come off. The horse's ribs are a packing-case. There's a great deal to be done with tow, and roofing-felt is a wonderful thing for armour. The drapery is canvas, stiffened with plaster of Paris, and had to be held in position till the folds got set. The harness is strips of felt nailed on. The tassels for the harness were made out of wire and an old door-mat. The statue had to be made in sections, and even then could be removed from the studio only through the window.

Mr. Lucchesi is, as his name denotes, of Italian origin, but, though his father came from the sunny South, his mother was an Englishwoman, and he was born in a part of the City then known as the Tenterground. In some form or another sculpture has



THE LAST ACT OF "FOR THE CROWN," AS PERFORMED AT PALMER'S THEATRE, NEW YORK.

surrounded him from his earliest childhood, for his father was a very successful moulder. Aspiring higher in his art, the lad studied in the West London Schools of Art, and then for five years at the Royal Academy Schools. At the latter he gained all possible honours, carrying off some hundreds of pounds in prizes, besides medals, one being a first prize for modelling from the life, and another the same for statues and groups, and he also held the Landsker Scholarship. However, since he left school, as a lad of twelve, it has been necessary for him to earn his own living, and he began as a moulder, soon becoming widely known, as well as being one of the most popular "bronzists." His moulding experiences, he says, have been of great value to him, for he worked for and with the greatest artists of the day, and has received most invaluable assistance from Mr. Onslow Ford, and also under Mr. H. H. Armstead. His first work was shown at Burlington House in 1881, a charming figure of a "Waif," and its success was so great that it decided the artist's fate, and he at once resolved to become a sculptor, and has since shown regularly at the Royal Academy and New Galleries, as well as in Munich. He modelled the statue in "His Excellency."



MR. LUCCHESI AND THE EQUESTRIAN STATUE USED IN "FOR THE CROWN" IN LONDON.

THE LIGHT SIDE OF NATURE.



SHE: How funny my face looks in this spoon!
HE: Let's try another spoon.



STOCKBROKERS' WIVES.

"I don't think your husband is looking very well, dear; and do you know, the other day I heard Jack say he'd been living entirely on slumps and booms lately? Why don't you try a change of diet?"



[Drawn by L. Raven-Hill.]

A CURIOSITY.

“Now that, I consider, is one of the rarest things in my collection—an honest penny.”



*Sing ho ! for March's breezes blow,
The rain comes pelting down,
The simple maid is sore afraid
To spoil her Sunday gown ;
The spaniel shivering at her feet,
She hurries o'er the slippery street,
Across the windy town.*

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HORS D'ŒUVRES.

Once more British and American representatives have been doing battle in a field of sportive war, and once more—though by the smallest possible margin—the representatives of the West have triumphed. But, happily, the field of battle was one on which no imputation of unfairness could be made or sustained. Chess by cable may not be intensely exciting to the average man, but it leaves little opening for dispute. No excursion steamers can block a pawn in its onward path to royalty; nor would it profit a player aught to affix surreptitious lead to the keel of his king.

If England's representatives met defeat, the fact, apart from the uncertainties of chess, seems to spring from two causes. Firstly, the number of boards is small. Now, while Mr. Pillsbury is admittedly stronger than any English-born player (though he contrived to lose, by a slip, in the match), and he is supported by several very strong combatants, the peculiar characteristic of English chess at present is the large number of good players, of a calibre below the first. It would have been easy to find some twenty men who could contest on even, or all but even, terms with the lower members of the British team. Had the match been for twenty or even twelve a-side, the result would almost certainly have been reversed.

Another lesson of the match is that in a long and arduous contest youth and freshness tell with especial force. The British team was composed of four "old stagers" and four young amateurs. Of the elder men, one, after having the worst of the game, won through a blunder of his opponent's. The other three lost their games by distinctly weak play, two of them having probably underrated their opponents, and failed to secure a draw when the position was even. Of the four younger men, one gained a brilliant victory, and the other three drew, two of them after having somewhat the advantage. In chess it is youth that tells. It is rare for a man to improve much as a player after forty.

The recently determined advance to or towards Dongola has aroused a perfect tempest of vituperation in the advanced London Radical and other foreign organs. "The opinion of the civilised world," or so much of it as is not in prison for blackmailing, is heavily down on perfidious Albion again, and French writers are again beginning to explain, in a most considerate manner, how they are going to smash us up, or at least compel us, in self-defence, to adopt conscription—a sight which will much gladden them. But will it? England, with her Navy increased and manned by the pick of her population, with a million or so of trained soldiers, would be indeed a flattering testimony to the danger of French enmity; but I doubt whether the flattery would be much relished.

Our good Continental critics seem to forget that, if England, retaining her increased Navy, were to have a mobile force of several hundred thousand men, the invasion scares would be turned the other way. At the next Census the British Isles will outnumber France in population. If that overplus were to be armed, might not the old trick of the Hundred Years' War be learnt again? They complain now of British arrogance and greed, much as Mr. William Sikes might condemn the ostentation of the wealthy man's display of plate. But if England were to have a force that made her absolutely secure at home, and a picked army of a hundred thousand who could be sent anywhere without risk of invasion, would she become less greedy or less arrogant? For, while now the Channel guards us, more or less imperfectly, from being attacked ourselves, it would then guard us against any effectual retaliation for our attacks. And if the interruption of trade caused distress, the temptation to support our men out of hostile territory, and make the enemy feed them, would be irresistible.

As Bacon put it long ago, the state that commands the sea can have as little or as much of the war as it pleases. On land, if one belligerent can cross the frontier, so can the other. But if we defeated the French fleet, we could land a force at any unguarded point of their coast, and no one could sally out in return. It was largely the fear of French ambition that drew the German states together under Prussia. The fear was flattering to France, but the results were not. So too with the new French military organisation. Germany does not enjoy the completeness of French preparations, though these are dictated by apprehensions of German aggression or hostility. So too with England. France may by constant menace drive us into conscription; but the first military act of our conscripts will be to invade France.

Wherefore let the boulevard scribes restrain their rancour. It is natural that they should hate John Bull; he seems to them an older and more lucky Max Lebaudy, and the Channel guards him from all chance of blackmailing. Here is a bloated millionaire, think these knights of the pen, and we can't tap his purse; let us open a newspaper campaign against him. But, alas! John Bullbaudy does not read the diatribes. He goes on his solid way heedless that he is scarified by a thousand tongues, a thousand pens. He even pays less and less attention to the squeals of his own discontented offspring. What is the poor civilised world to do?

MARMITON.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

Yet another Scottish idyllist! Mr. Neil Munro, a Glasgow journalist, gives us some idylls of the Highlands, under the title "The Lost Pibroch, and other Shieling Stories." Two or three chapters have already appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, where they have attracted some attention. There can be no doubt that the book is far above the average—indeed, there is about it an unmistakable touch of genius, and, in many parts, it is excellently written. The stories are all, or nearly all, tragic in their complexion. They are full of colour and passion, but they do not make particularly easy reading, and the bits of Gaelic interspersed throughout help to add to the mystification. "Black Murdo" is, I think, on the whole, the best, but others run it very nearly. It is hardly to be expected that Mr. Munro will score the popular success of some recent Scottish idyllists. For that, he is too *erie*, too remote—in short, too Celtic. But he has done a bit of work that will take a high and permanent place in the literature of Scotch romance, and which inclines one to anticipate his future with much interest.

Another notable book is "Kriegspiel," by Mr. Francis Hindes Groome. Mr. Groome is one of the most accomplished writers of the day. His knowledge is encyclopædic, and his style is always vital and graphic. Some of his books have attracted wide attention, and it is well known that in the columns of the *Athenæum* and other influential journals he has shown himself a fully equipped and very able critic. "Kriegspiel" is, as it could hardly fail to be, a notable and distinguished book. It is a story of love and tragedy, and the writer moves with firm step through very remote and difficult regions. The chief character of the tale, Dr. Watson, is a historical personage, and Mr. Groome's intimate knowledge of his period and imaginative power enable him to give us one of the most striking personages in recent fiction. The book is never melodramatic; the writer never lets himself go. He is, perhaps, specially at home in the delineation of Gipsies. But in other parts, and notably in a strange chapter of Edinburgh life, he shows himself a master. Nothing so good has been done since Mr. Blackmore's "Parson Chown." Decidedly "Kriegspiel" is a book to be read and re-read.

"Moff," the latest number of Mr. Unwin's "Century Library," is by John Tweeddale, and depicts the ugly side of Scotch life—its vulgarity, its scandal, its avarice, its impurity, and its general baseness. "John Tweeddale," the author, goes to his work with a will, and unquestionably knows what he is writing about. There is no special power or distinction in his style; he is clear and matter-of-fact. He will carry his readers with him, and they will lay down the book not ill-pleased that Moff has rescued the Laird, and not inclined to weep over the sorrows of Miss MacLatchy. The only sympathetic character in the book is the minister's wife, who is a benevolent match-maker. There is truth in Mr. Tweeddale's view, but it is a sort of truth that forces itself upon everyone's attention, and for a fresh exposition of which there will, I fear, be little gratitude.

I am concerned for Mr. W. Pett Ridge. He is a favourite of mine, and has it in him to do excellent work of a kind very uncommon in our time—bright, clean, light-hearted work, without profundity of any kind. His danger is in a certain agreeable glibness, which carries him away. He can turn out copy of a passable kind with immense facility, and such a writer in these days is sure to be tempted. I do not wish to say anything against the numerous libraries of fiction, but it must be owned that their editors induce our clever young writers to do much that is unworthy of them. Messrs. Hutchinson have started a two-shilling library, and Mr. Pett Ridge has opened it with "The Second Opportunity of Mr. Staplehurst." His book is well enough; in fact, it is quite clever and sensible, but much of it is mere padding, and it is notably inferior to the book which preceded it. The Scotch dialect, I may add, is detestable.

The prospectus of these sumptuously got-up and illustrated eight volumes of horrors, "Celebrated Crimes," by Alexandre Dumas (H. S. Nichols), quotes Dumas' profession that "the purpose of his life was to put the history of France into romance"; but what have these crimes to do with either history or romance? Reading Dumas' novels may be like, to parody Coleridge's comment on Shakspeare's historical plays, reading history by flashes of limelight; but these crimes no more make history than the Seine sewers constitute Paris. Still less can enormities so sordid or so savage be called romantic, since romance at least hides, if it does not kill, "the ape and tiger" in man. On the other hand, it must be admitted that no history and no romance can rival these records of incredible crimes in interest. You may call this interest melodramatic or morbid, degraded or degrading, but, at least, it is absorbing. It is not possible for anyone, however fastidious or affectedly fastidious, to open these volumes at any page without being compelled to read on to the close; while the psychological interest of many of the stories is as deep as their narrative interest. You are, again and again, amazed by the incoherencies and inconsistencies of these Titanic criminals, which would suggest that their natures were built, so to say, in water-tight compartments. M. Jacques Wagrez, who prepared most of the designs for the volumes, hardly claims too much in asserting that "the result is both brilliant and delicate"; and hardly expects too much in assuming "that the work will have great success among the book-lovers."

O. O.

PARLIAMENT.

BY "A RASH RADICAL."

Situations change, no doubt, as rapidly as the weather. I remember no time so full of surprises, so exciting, so perilous to statesmen, to Parties, and to the Empire, since the old days of the Ministry of Lord Beaconsfield. We are not likely to forget the five years between 1875 and 1880, and it looks as if the coming five years were to be just as full and just as sensational. On the heels of the American trouble, the African trouble, the Eastern trouble, has come this sudden hot wind from the desert—the news that, before a few months are over, we may have definitely undertaken the reconquest of the Soudan with an expedition starting from these shores, and backed by the whole force—partly Egyptian, partly English, which represents our outposts of civilisation in Egypt. The worst of it is that this serious news was communicated to Parliament in a more hap-hazard, less authoritative, less reasonable way than any great announcement of recent years.

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

The difficulty has arisen largely out of the way in which the Foreign Office is represented. In the House of Lords there is Lord Salisbury, autocratic, secretive, having all power in his own fingers, unchecked by any colleague who has a right or a disposition to dispute his authority or question his experience. In the House of Commons there is young Mr. Curzon—handsome, dapper, thinking well of himself—with a certain knowledge picked up by diligent, but still superficial, travelling—indiscreet, self-conscious, and far too given to oratorical flourishes when all that the House expects from him is plain statement. The result is you do not get the statement, and you have far too much of the flourish. In respect, indeed, of the Foreign Secretary, the Tories are very much worse served than the Liberals. Sir Edward Grey is quite as young as Mr. Curzon, and he looks younger; but he has nothing of Mr. Curzon's travel experience. He does not even know French, and his appearance, though very good, is perhaps a little against him as a repository of state secrets. But at his work he was excellent, unapproachable: he never did a wrong thing; his phrasings were admirable for discretion and good sense. He could be firm, he could be statesmanlike; he could always be trusted to keep due measure, to maintain a right tone. In all these respects Mr. Curzon has erred. He has been asked to explain the proposal of an advance to Akasheh and thence to Dongola, and he ought to have done so in the soberest and least imaginative phrasing. Instead of that, he let himself go, and was drawn, in the course of an interrogation by Mr. Labouchere, into the very large and risky expression towards Italy of "our staunch allies." To add to the comedy of errors that has been going on, he actually read to the House of Commons despatches from Lord Cromer which Lord Salisbury, on the same day, and practically at the same hour, in the House of Lords, was declining to read, as being confidential documents. In this respect Lord Salisbury proved to be wrong, and Mr. Curzon right; but the incident, about which people have talked a great deal, illustrates the strange isolation of Lord Salisbury's character, the way in which he plays the veiled prophet to the whole foreign policy of the country.

THE EGYPTIAN POLICY.

Nor, I must say, has the policy been well received. Everybody has been mystified by the contradictory explanations given of it. In one breath it has been suggested it is a mere defensive affair, with a very limited purpose; with the next we have vague language about giving help to Italy in Kassala, which is nearly seven hundred miles away from Akasheh. Then we are told that the power of the Khalifa is declining, and then, again, that his forces are menacing Kassala, and are mustering at Khartoum and Dongola. All this, combined with the instinctive dislike one feels when one hears Soudan mentioned, has created a very uneasy impression. Moreover, it is not at all certain that the Unionist section of the Administration—or, at least, of the Party in power—is keen for the advance. Mr. Courtney, in one of the most impressive orations that has been delivered for many a long month, has strongly, and almost unconditionally, denounced it. You hear mutterings in the Unionist Press—especially from Birmingham; in the Lobby men shake their heads and plainly say they do not like it. The Party is cool, and, as Lord Salisbury is not especially popular, on account of his isolation and silence, it is clear that the Government, if they are to have a strong forward policy in Egypt, will want a good deal of backing. On the other hand, the trouble has drawn the Liberals a good deal together, and they are preparing for the first full-dress assault on the Government the present Administration has known.

THE RADICAL SCHISM.

Meanwhile, the little Radical schism has gone on, and herein the Government may find an unexpected source of strength. Mr. Labouchere is very angry at the turn the discussion on organisation has taken, and he is at present minded to form a Party of his own, with the main object of discrediting the Front Opposition Bench and creating a new balance of forces. In this, I fancy, he may, to some extent, succeed, owing, in some measure, to the strength which Sir Charles Dilke is gaining. Foreign affairs have, of course, given him many an opening, and he has fully availed himself of them. On the Egyptian business he spoke with force and fire I never before detected in him, which undoubtedly produced a great impression. As a destructive agent he may go very far, and as a free-lance critic of the Government he has certainly done more than any other single man.

PARLIAMENT.

BY "A CAUTIOUS CONSERVATIVE."

It is not quite a healthy state of things in a Party when it is outwardly as loyal as possible, and inwardly in a constant grumble. I must honestly confess that I look forward to something better in the Unionist Party than I see at present. The voting in the House of Commons does not quite tally with the feeling of repressed criticism which exists undoubtedly in many Conservative quarters. There is a prevalent idea that the Government is not altogether happy in its utterances, and not always in its actions. At the same time, the Unionist majority is so large that there is never any uneasiness about the support which the Cabinet can count upon. As an instance of the feeling against the Government, I may mention the subject of the proposed retiring pension to the Duke of Cambridge. It is not that the Conservatives grudge, as the Radicals do, the paltry sum of £1800 a-year to a Royal Duke who has served his country for forty years. But it is only a few months since the Government definitely said that no such pension would be proposed; and yet now Mr. Balfour calmly says that they have changed their minds. This answer deceives nobody, but the ordinary member simply replies that the Government has no business to change its mind, and that it must be a queer sort of mind which changes like this. If the Marquis of Lansdowne had been "got at" in any way, then so much the worse for this Liberal-Unionist Peer. But anything more calculated to annoy a large section of the Conservative and Unionist rank and file cannot well be imagined.

THE USE OF A PARTY MAJORITY.

Nevertheless, in spite of private criticism, the Party is extraordinarily, I was going to say pedantically, loyal. Mr. Mildmay's Bill for marking foreign and colonial meat, for instance, being supported in principle by Mr. Ritchie, was accepted for second reading by a majority of 142. On such an occasion the Press and the outside public must come in to correct the hasty loyalties of a largely predominant Party. Such a Bill cannot possibly become law. It would be absurd to mark every mutton-chop, and useless to make such distinctions between New Zealand meat and Welsh. The public can very well look after itself without any such socialistic, sumptuary legislation. Punish a swindling butcher, by all means, if he sells you frozen kidneys at threepence each, which really should be one-and-three the dozen, and sends you colonial mutton at fivepence when he makes you pay for English at tenpence. But all these "marks," and the new army of inspectors, and the volumes of registers—well, it was a Wednesday afternoon, and honourable members voted with the Government with a sort of idea that the British farmer was being benefited. As regards the Egyptian vote, no doubt Mr. Leonard Courtney, the one Unionist who goes so far as to vote steadily against his Party, would make the same complaint. I cannot go as far as that. The Party naturally supports the Ministry on an administration question of military policy. But there is considerable dissatisfaction at the cavalier way in which information has been doled out. When Lord Salisbury, in the House of Lords, was declining to produce telegrams which Mr. Curzon, in the Commons, was then reading, this "official caution" approached to farce. Mr. Curzon's representation of the Foreign Office is not a brilliant success, so far as his speeches go. He had no business to call Italy our "ally" if he did not mean it; and, altogether, he seemed to have no agreement with his chief as to what to say and what not to say. I am afraid that they have so much to talk about in the Cabinet just now that not enough attention is paid to the necessity of everybody saying the same thing in public.

MINISTERIAL SUCCESSES.

A word must be said about the Chancellor of the Exchequer's splendid speech about Bimetallism last week. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach has never done anything better in the House of Commons. His reply was statesmanlike, and fair to the Bimetallists, while, at the same time, he declined to contemplate any tampering with the gold standard of Great Britain. For close reasoning and convincing argument, as also for calm and deliberate delivery, this was the best speech on a financial subject delivered in the House for very many years. If Sir Michael keeps at this level in his Budget speeches, he will be a great Chancellor of the Exchequer. Two other members of the Ministry made successful official débuts last week, Lord Dudley, with the Companies' Bill in the House of Lords, and Mr. Austen Chamberlain, as representing the Admiralty, on the Naval Works Bill in the Commons. Young Mr. Austen's appointment was open to criticism, but his industry at the Admiralty has earned the encomiums of Mr. Goschen, and his modesty and command of his facts on Thursday made an excellent impression.

EGYPT.

There is something peculiarly nauseating in the Radical outcry against the Government about Egypt. Mr. John Morley and Sir William Harcourt, however, probably know their own business in their open abandonment of Lord Rosebery on this question. As the Roseberyite Liberals admit, the Liberal Party really owes it to its own credit that some reparation should be made for Mr. Gladstone's abandonment of the Soudan, by which Egyptian territory has lapsed into barbarism. And they ought to be only too glad that a Conservative Government is in office to do the work, and so save them the unpleasant task of formally turning over Mr. Gladstone and all his works. This is the line privately taken by the Imperialistic section of the Liberal Party, but Mr. John Morley still clings to the narrow Little-Englandism of Mr. Gladstone's Egyptian policy.

SOCIETY ON WHEELS.

When to light up:—To-day, 7.19; to-morrow, 7.20; March 27, 7.22; March 28, 7.24; March 29, 7.25; March 30, 7.27; March 31, 7.29.
When to extinguish:—To-day, 4.52; to-morrow, 4.50; March 27, 4.47; March 28, 4.45; March 29, 4.43; March 30, 4.41; March 31, 4.38.

In some of the Southern counties bicycling has developed into a new sport—the “paper-chase” on wheels. It is very much in vogue. A few days ago there was a “meet” of twenty-six bicycles near Andover. The hares were a charming young lady and her cavalier; the course was some twenty miles, the hares carrying the bags of paper over their handle-bars. This appears to me to be carrying bicycling a little too far. The exertion must be very exhausting; it is not yet generally known how easily, by heroics on wheels, you may acquire a varicose vein.

Many a true cyclist, however, disdains the morning ride in Hyde Park, and seeks recreation farther afield. The other day Miss Gertrude Kingston rode from Ascot to Town, doing the twenty-five miles in something under three hours—a creditable performance. Her bicycle is a “Premier.” She

can don knickerbockers and be a woman still; but an Englishwoman cannot. The form of the one is different from that of the other. It is well to state the case thus plainly, for the bicycling fashions of Paris have invaded the streets of London and the Park, and they don't suit either. All Frenchwomen can walk gracefully; in England, alack! it is only a few who can. In Paris many a woman can be “rational” in her dress without being ashamed; in England, invariably, shame follows in the wake of “reason”—and that should end the matter.

Unfortunately, it does not end it. Sometimes, when you take your walks abroad in the West-End, you may behold a young woman “rationally” clad—and shudder. She is not fair to see. It is not so much that her knickerbockers do not suit her as that she does not suit them. In her case “the human form divine” lacks scope and verge enough. I need not go further into details. They are physiological, and therefore not suited to the students of what is written in these pages. The students of the pictures will catch what I mean; and there we may leave the subject.

If the Duke of Cambridge were a little younger in his ideas, it would be a deal better for wheelists; but “George Ranger” is



SUNDAY MORNING AT THAMES DITTON.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRY R. GIBBS, KINGSLAND ROAD, N.

prefers a high seat, with the saddle placed well forward, which gives you an advantage in going uphill. The popular actress wears an ordinary wet-weather skirt of dark blue, measuring only about two yards and a half, which has a very neat appearance; it is lined with silk. She says that a skirt of light material is better without lining, and with only elastic inside.

Almost every day we hear of some clever new invention. I have just been looking at a “Sunbeam” with several great improvements. It had a celluloid mud-guard, which is much lighter than that made of the ordinary metal. The pump also was made of celluloid, and was quite ornamental.

You remember the episode in “Catriona,” when Barbara Grant, finding the Lord Chief Justice in a “favourable stage of claret,” told how, on a trying occasion, the Highland heroine had tucked up her skirts to “God kens whaur”? I myself do, at any rate, and I often think of Mr. Stevenson's heroine and her critic when I take a turn in “the Ladies' Mile.”

Not that you often see a “rational dress” in that pleasant pathway. The dresses there are mostly irrational, by which I mean normal; and, therefore, I think, becoming. Reason, which is the foe of poetry, is the foe of grace as well—in matters of dress, I mean. A Frenchwoman

more elderly than he should be. Last year you could bicycle in Hyde Park until ten in the morning; this year you can take a spin until twelve; but, as nobody took to the saddle while the ten o'clock rule obtained, the reform is a difference without a distinction. When all is said and done, a horse is more inspiring than a Humber. You will get out of bed in time to ride a horse before breakfast; but you will think twice before you are heroic in the same way about a bicycle, and when you have thought twice you conclude that you had better stay where you are. Not that there is any essential difference between a horse and a Humber. The Humber shakes you up almost as much as the horse does, and gives you an equal appetite for breakfast. But, while the horse is in fashion by eight o'clock, the bicycle is not in vogue until ten. Far be it from me to explain the mystery. I do but state it—and seek to draw a moral.

I would like to remind cyclists of the Act of Parliament bearing upon the right of road. On overtaking any cart or carriage, or any horse, or mule, or other beast of burden, or any foot-passenger, being on or proceeding along the carriage-way, every such person shall, within a reasonable distance from and before passing such, &c., by sounding a bell or whistle, or otherwise, give audible and sufficient warning of the approach of the carriage.

THE WORLD OF SPORT.

FOOTBALL.

I sincerely trust that England will be able to reassert her superiority over Scotland under Association rules—in fact, I am sufficiently patriotic to hope that we may prove the better team on the all-important 4th prox. A victory to us here would, in some measure, compensate for our dreadful ineptitude under the Rugger code. We are a stoical, a dogmatic race, but we find it a bitter task to look four successive defeats from Scotland in the face unflinchingly. That Scotland did not win the Rugby International Championship does not make our confusion the worse, for, apart from the uncertainty of the game, which was well exemplified in this competition, Englishmen do not regard Ireland as the best fifteen of the year. If Scotland played against the other countries as she played against England, then the Championship would once more have gone to the North Country.

On the face of it, England's task under the Association code of rules this season should be severer than ever before. The decision of Scotland to draw upon Scotsmen resident with English League clubs has begotten a feeling of anxiety in England, though, of course, we do not regret Scotland's determination to place in the field its strongest eleven. At the same time, one should never forget that these—shall we call them Anglo-Scots?—at any rate, to go no farther, perfected their football in England. On this score grumbling would be belated, for Wales and Ireland have both played "English" professionals for some years. As a matter of fact, Ireland once played a real live Englishman, in Reynolds, of Aston Villa, though, of course, under a misapprehension. Reynolds is a humorist, and therefore he let the Irish authorities labour under the delusion that he had been born in the land of stews and shillelaghs.

So far, England has done well enough in her Internationals. She went to Ireland, and scored two goals to none; and she went to Cardiff—and, to paraphrase Mr. W. S. Gilbert, I went to Cardiff too!—and there registered nine goals to one. This defeat of Wales was, to say the least, astounding. As a matter of fact, collateral form had pointed to a victory for the Principality, who had scored against Ireland six goals to one, as against our two to none, though it must not be overlooked that Wales played Ireland at home, whereas England was called upon to cross the Channel, and to run the gauntlet of *mal-de-mer*.

But, apart from conditions, England must be credited with a brilliant performance against Wales. To score nine goals to one on a foreign ground is simply unparalleled; but England did better than this, for she deserved on the play to win by a much more decisive margin. Wales was from start to finish clearly outplayed, though she was strongly represented. On the face of it, England could not do harm by putting the same victorious eleven in the field against Scotland, but this is extremely doubtful. From my view of the Cardiff game, I think the alterations should come in at right half-back and on the left-wing forward. To-day at Leyton there will be the meeting of the Gentlemen and the Players, and this may afford some clue, though I cannot say that I ever attach much importance to trial games of this description, for the chances are seldom equally balanced.

CRICKET.

The Australian cricketers are on their way, and we are all on the hot coals of eager anticipation to see what the gods, personified by the Australian Cricket Council, have sent us. At the last moment there has been an important alteration, for C. T. B. Turner found it impossible to make the journey. It is stated that Albert Trott, who is on his way to England—though not as a member of the team—will take his place. If this be so, then the Australians will be lucky. The loss of Turner is a calamity; but if there was one player who, in our eyes, could efficiently take his place, that man was Albert Trott, who ought really to have been one of the original choices.

I am still of the opinion that the Colonials will be found weak in bowling. The men they have to rely upon in attack are George Giffen, G. H. S. Trott, A. E. Trott, H. Trumble, E. Jones, T. R. McKibbin, and C. J. Eady. These cannot all play together, because the batting would not be strong enough, but, even if they could, they would not inspire terror. Harry Trott has never been more than a moderate "change" in England, Giffen was easily played when he last came over in 1893, while Trumble has never done anything useful against English batsmen. It is the new men who will have to be relied upon, and of these only Albert Trott—the reserve!—attained any success against Mr. Stoddart's team.

GOLF.

I am informed that the team to represent Ulster against Leinster at Portrush, on Easter Tuesday, will be composed of A. N. Charley, G. S. Clarke, G. Combe, T. Dickson, A. D. Gaussen, F. F. Figgis, H. Gregg, H. E. Reade, J. S. Reade, R. Gibson, J. Woodside, R. Woodside, James Woodside, Dr. A. Trail, G. M. Shaw, W. L. Wheeler, O. B. Webb, W. H. Webb, and H. E. Richardson.

A new golf club has just been formed in Portobello, of which Dr. A. Balfour is the president, Mr. J. Kiddie the captain, and Mr. James B. Miller the secretary.

ROWING.

I suppose, in accordance with time-honoured custom, I am expected to express my fancy in the University Boat Race, which takes place on Saturday next. Frankly, I am at a loss. I have had plenty of

opportunity of seeing the crews at practice, but for the life of me I cannot say which way victory is likely to turn. At the outset, I regarded Cambridge as far the better crew, but, since they have been on tidal waters, Oxford have improved to a terrific extent, and time-tests, at any rate, point to their success.

But time-tests ever were deceptive. To me, it seems that much depends on the conditions on the day. If the water be choppy, or the least bit rough, I should plump boldly for

CAMBRIDGE.

In smooth water, Oxford's short but lively stroke gets them through at a great pace. One thing is certain, and that is that not only are the crews above the average, but that the Light Blues seem to have returned to their best traditions in style. It is high time the Cantabs secured a victory.

OLYMPIAN.

RACING NOTES BY CAPTAIN COE.

The Grand National will be a good race. I am glad to note that several improvements have been made in the stands at Aintree, and Mr. W. S. Gladstone informs me the Press-box is now perfect. I am still of opinion that the big steeplechase will be won by Cathal, who is to be ridden by the Hon. R. Ward. The horse has a nasty habit of turning his head, which shows he is a bit of a puller and wants clever handling. All the same, I cannot get away from his second of last year, and I shall stand him to win, while Why Not and Ardearn may be placed. I am told Merry Wise is very likely to capture the Liverpool Spring Cup.

The Earl and Countess of Radnor generally visit the Lincoln Meeting, possibly because her ladyship is a sister of Mr. H. Chaplin, M.P. It is somewhat remarkable that Lord Radnor seldom visits a race-meeting except Lincoln and Salisbury, although he has several racehorses in training, and runs them under both rules. Lord and Lady Radnor both look over the training of his lordship's horses; and they take the liveliest interest in thoroughbreds, also in pedigree cattle. The Countess of Radnor has a model farm, which she is said to manage successfully. Lord Radnor hunts his own hounds in the Salisbury district, and often manages to show good sport.

A very funny incident occurred at the recent Army Point-to-Point Races, which took place near Ascot. Mr. Leopold de Rothschild had provided a luncheon-tent, well stocked, for the benefit of visitors. It seems, however, that a gang of the "boys" took possession of the tent and consumed everything, and even Mr. Leopold de Rothschild himself had to beg a bit of lunch off Lord Rosebery, who happened to be entertaining some friends. All that could be found for one of the officials was a bottle of brandy, but no sandwiches, and, when Mr. Official went to look for water, he stupidly left the cognac behind, and, of course, on his return it had disappeared!

Trainers are complaining of the high price of fodder, and they hint that training charges must be put up. I have an idea that the trainers who do not spend their money extravagantly are doing well; but it is the general rule with them nowadays to keep butlers, valets, and dine late, living in luxury, while many a poor owner, suffering from agricultural depression, has to live very short to be able to pay his training-bills and make both ends meet. It is a remarkable fact in connection with racing that jockeys, trainers, and bookmakers can thrive at it, while the actual owner of the horses, sooner or later, has to cry a go.

Many of the bookmakers who formerly stayed in London and did their business, now follow the meetings, and have their S. P. telegrams sent on to them. They found, under the old régime, that two or three times each week big starting-price jobs were worked, out of which they could not possibly get clear, and they determined to quit the game. In the future most of the winning money will reach the course in good time, and those members of the sharp division who contemplate getting 10 to 1 about 6 to 4 chances will have to hit upon a new scheme.

Now that the G. P. O. authorities are to have control of the telephone trunk-lines, it is to be hoped the telephone will be oftener used for despatching result messages from our racecourses. Without a doubt, short messages could be sent much more quickly by telephone than they are now by telegraph. Further, the ordinary wires would then be available for long messages, such as descriptions, runners, introductions, &c. It will hardly be credited that, while the winner's name only takes a few seconds to wire from any racecourse to the London newspaper offices, it is thought to be smart work if the description of a race is received under an hour.

M. Cannon is very likely to head the winning jockeys' list again in '96, as he is in the best of health, and has had to do no wasting. M. Cannon is fond of exercise. He hunts, is a good swimmer, plays cricket fairly well, is very fond of shooting, yachting, and billiards. If reports are true, he will have the handling of some very useful horses from the Kingsclere stable this year, and his prospects are rosy in the extreme. T. Loates and Bradford both ought to be well up in the winning list; and of the light-weights, I think Grimshaw will be the best to follow. His services are much sought after by owners when they have horses handicapped under 7st. 5lb.

OUR LADIES' PAGES.

DRESS AT THE PLAY.

Wherever Mrs. Cecil Raleigh is, there also will inevitably be found something exceedingly smart in the way of gowns—a fact which I have proved so often that I even went hopefully to the Olympic and “True Blue” in search of fashion.

Mrs. Raleigh did not disappoint me, for I found her wearing one splendidly effective dress—a Russell and Allen creation, indeed—where buttercup-yellow and poppy-red create a sensation by their unconventional but eminently successful union, a union which should teach a valuable lesson to every brunette.

The predominating colour is that beautiful deep yellow, the skirt of mirror moiré, of ever-changing aspect—truly, in this connection, variety is charming—while the bodice is of yellow chiffon, its accordion-pleated fulness drawn into a yoke of deep poppy-red velvet embroidered in paillettes, gold and jet mingling with others of a wonderful iridescent beauty. This embroidered velvet is continued in the form of bretelles, the centre one tapering to a mere line at the waist, with its encircling band of glittering velvet, and then falling on to the skirt, where two other pointed tabs are permanent features.

The throat is left quite bare—actresses have always had a distaste for high collars and the stiffness of bows and rosettes, which do not tend to grace and freedom of movement, and now Dame Fashion is inclined to back them up.

Next as to the sleeves—those all-important items which either stamp a gown immediately with the hall-mark of up-to-dateness, or with the damaging badge of last season—these bear hall-marks on every inch of the soft, transparent chiffon, which at the top is arranged in graceful folds and soft puffs, the arm below being closely outlined by a long rucked cuff coming well over the hand—altogether, a sleeve which deserves to be placed beside Miss Calhoun's (of “Gossip” fame), and referred to when you are in any doubt on this all-important question.

As a finish to the costume, Mrs. Raleigh wears, during some time, a large hat of black drawn tulle, adorned with ostrich plumes—truly, the infinitely adaptable qualities of the black picture-hat form matter for wonder, for I do not think that I have yet met the dress to which it would not give an added charm and a perfect finish.

From all this feminine glory of colouring and richness of fabric, to the uncompromising severity of a stoker's suit of blue serge, is a very long leap, and yet Mrs. Raleigh manages to take it, and to look very handsome indeed in her bifurcated garments—though they are not donned for long, for she has three other costumes to display during the lengthy progress of the play—a female matador's dress of black satin for one, the full knickerbockers half concealed by a jauntily draped overskirt, while touches of scarlet and gold gleam out here and there; and next, a very smart coat-and-skirt costume of white cloth, with a draped vest of turquoise-blue chiffon, the coat made notable by the clever arrangement of the basque (originally an inspiration of Doucet's), which is destitute of any fulness, but is cut in a series of overlapping tabs, caught together by beautiful enamel buttons edged with diamonds, a touch of vivid blue appearing again in the lining of the deep cuffs and the revers.

Of course, there is a tea-gown for the death-scene—the “female villain” invariably expires in a tea-gown in every up-to-date melodrama—and as Mrs. Raleigh has to die by drowning, she has chosen a clinging robe of vivid scarlet silk, slightly trained and accordion-pleated from neck to hem, the long angel-sleeves, with their finely jetted border, leaving the arms entirely free. The waist is encircled by a long-ended jet girdle, and the slight *décolletage* is outlined by a band of jet. There is nothing

to relieve the severe simplicity, for nothing is needed when a woman is blessed with such superb neck and arms as is Mrs. Raleigh.

I need hardly tell you that this delightful gown, with its dozens of yards of silk, is not to be subjected to the ravages of real water. Stage mechanism does away with any such necessity, and a clever arrangement of gauzy silk does duty for waves!

So much for the Olympic; and now I must spare a few words to two or three new gowns whose acquaintance I made when I paid a third visit to that very fascinating “Shop Girl” who does such good business at the Gaiety.

One of the “foundlings” has a dress which inspired me with feelings of the keenest envy, for—imagine!—it has a skirt of dark-blue glacé, patterned with a large check in white, while the bodice (with the exception of the full sleeves, which are of the glacé) is of pale-yellow chiffon, half concealed by a zouave of white satin, bordered with an appliqué of black lace butterflies, an idea which is well worth stealing, though it seems somewhat unkind to steal anything from a “foundling”; but, then, everything is fair in love—and fashion!

Miss Grace Palotta has a delightful Louis costume of pale-pink satin, with a full vest of chiffon, and shoulder-capes and cascades of lace, crowned by a toque with a tiny pointed crown entirely covered with dark-hued violets, and having pink roses and pink ribbon for trimming; but most absolutely charming of all is Miss Ethel Haydon's bazaar-dress of softest white silk made in Empire style, with bunches of forget-me-nots nestling on the shoulders and in the frilled chiffon sleeves, while one long spray outlines the Empire bands of the corsage.

To see and hear Miss Haydon singing “I want you, my honey,” in this costume is a positive delight to eyes and ears alike; but excess of admiration must not lead anyone to copy the dress unless they boast of a goodly share of fresh beauty, and have not yet left their teens behind them.

FLORENCE.

FASHIONS.

Seriously, I have often debated whether the farmer, whose special prerogative is grumbling, or the poor woman of fashion, who never gets any sympathy from anybody, no matter how afflicting the weather, is most to be pitied. After all, are not frocks and furbelows as great a question with us as corn and turnips to the worthy but eternally complaining son of the soil? And which is the greater evil to have—a wardrobe full of millinery masterpieces that cannot be worn by reason of rain, or a field full of seeds that will not come up for the want of it? Every-

thing, as someone says somewhere, is merely comparative; but, whether for spring frocks or spring crops, an aggravating procession of wet days such as we have been lately enduring is surely the reverse of reassuring. With this impossible weather, fascinating gowns hang listlessly in one's wardrobe, and tulle-embellished millinery becomes a mere dreariness of spirit. A friend, who was cheerfully preparing for some country-house visits in Ireland, asked me the other day, as an authority on the subject somewhat, what kind of clothes I would advise, when her brother, who happened to be in the room, said, “A mackintosh and an umbrella; and, if you *could* wear stilts”—which, indeed, would also sum up our necessities here of late, I thought. All the more do our wet skies seem tantalising when from friends at Cannes and all along the Riviera come blissful accounts of open-air fêtes and the possibility of lace parasols. From Cannes, by the way, where the Regatta has foregathered all the world, I get distracting news of the gaiety in garments indulged in by extravagant fair dames who appear each day on yacht or promenade. One sweet thing in hats I have seen hailed, in the first instance, from Paris. It is of fancy violine straw, with a small brim; the crown low, as is the mode, but made to look higher by its trimming, which



MRS. CECIL RALEIGH IN “TRUE BLUE.”

[Copyright.]

consists of violets, with their foliage, and gardenias. A further tuft of leaves, with a white aigrette placed on the left side, completes the simple but smart "altogether."

Descriptions of dress so often sound wearisome, by reason of the necessary technicalities of their summing-up, that I am often shy of imposing needless detail without the "alleviating circumstance" of a sketch. But, if any young woman with a taste for the beautiful will follow me through the intricacies of this following frock, she will be rewarded by getting an account verbatim of one of the best gowns which a man-milliner, famous for his originality, has accomplished this year. It is one of a forthcoming big trousseau, and cost the modest sum of four thousand francs. A thick duchesse satin of real dog-rose pink was the foundation on which this work of art was built up; the skirt flat in front and at the sides, which, though tight over the hips, widened into well-set-out godets below. Frills of old Louis Seize Alençon lace trim the apron, or middle seam, at each side, the same lace falling in cascades to the end of the skirt. Rosettes of amber satin ribbon, made with ends, are sewn on at intervals across the lace, each end of ribbon being ornamented with alternate posies of violets and yellow hyacinths. The bodice, shaped with exquisite art, shows no seams, but, cut rather low, is fastened between folded pleats at the back. Its front is in the fashionable blouse form, with wide folds, from which points of Alençon lace fall over the skirt, and bows of yellow satin ribbon. I much admired the waistband, which is made of two bands of the yellow ribbon, placed apart, and fastened with rosettes behind. Full epaulettes of Alençon form sleeves, and these are caught up with knots of the same violet and yellow flowers which appear on the skirt. Under the lace drapery I should have mentioned that pink mousseline de soie is used as a foundation, thus giving the necessary fulness and softness which are still required in otherwise diminishing sleevelets. I recommend this *chic* dress to the attention of some smart reader. She will not meet her double here, as the original is on its way by now to Odessa, where resides one of the best-dressed women in Europe, who is shortly to become Baroness de Gunzbourg.

Tulle braid, embroidered with gold thread, and spangled with silver, is one of the new trimmings which abound in such variety this season. I saw a dinner-dress of white satin worn by a bride some evenings since trimmed with it, which, with sleeves and vest also of white tulle, fully puffed, looked very charming. Apropos of embroideries, I rarely saw more dainty stitching than on Mrs. Dallison's stall at the Irish Sale at Londonderry House. This work is done by about two hundred ladies in reduced circumstances living in and about Cork. Many of the beautiful designs are supplied by Mrs. Dallison's brother. One example, of true-lovers' knots and forget-me-nots worked in different blues on white satin, so commended itself as a tea-gown or dress-panel that I induced a luxuriously-minded friend to immediately annex it at the very moderate price asked. Before quitting the subject of evening-gowns I wish to put to the feminine vote a very charming mauve satin, made in a new way, which is here reproduced as well as I can verbally describe it. The skirt is formed in rather wide accordion-pleats all round, two panels of broad Alençon insertion jewelled with tiny paste being carried down both sides of front. The bodice, also pleated, has a gracefully draped garniture of the same yellowish lace, powdered in the new way with small brilliants. A bunch of realistic *thé* roses and heliotrope catches the lace butterfly low on one side. Puffed sleeves turned up very high complete a very lovely little gown.

Have I sufficiently assured everybody that capes are undergoing, not a radical, but rather a conservative change, since the old style of Marie Antoinette's time reappears in our fashionable midst? This description of the coming by-and-by will explain itself unmistakably. The long, square ends reaching to the feet, with ruchings and trimmings of tulle, are but modern adaptations of a long-past mode. Green and copper shot silk is the material of which it is composed, bows of green satin ribbon, sewn into the *bouillonnée* of black tulle, giving an added touch of gaiety. Even the Marie Antoinette coiffure—with modifications—is already accepted by some who pride themselves on being the first to adopt a departure, and at a little *dîner intime* in Paris, about ten days since, I was lost in awe over a lovely lady who wore a curled and supple chignon, with two short curls resting affectionately on her white neck in identical semblance of the head-dress we see in some pictures of the ill-fated Queen. One of the new diadem tiaras, worn almost over the forehead, completed this singular but historically correct arrangement. I cannot think the style will obtain, somehow. Fancy going to an evening-party in *ringlets*!—for that is what it practically amounts to—only one never knows what fashion may make one arrive at. I heard dozens of women vow that nothing would induce them to wear hair loosely puffed over the ears in laborious undulations. But that was two years ago! She who goes now in severely plain and tightly drawn back-tresses has not, it may be safely pronounced, the habit of the fashionable world.

Political parties, by the way, are not always so well-dressed as they might be—doubtless, owing to the more or less inevitable *olla podrida* of which they are often necessarily composed. Members' wives and cousins unto the fourth generation have not always nowadays the *cachet* of Lady Clara Vere de Vere—low be it spoken. Yet was Lady Lucy Hicks-Beach's gathering on Wednesday an exception to this dowdy rule. Downing Street was, indeed, unpolitically gay, and, apart from social aspect, contained a number of new and undeniably Paris frocks. There was a green tulle, set off with embroideries of black-and-white, in which diamonds—or was it paste?—sparkled with excellent effect. I admired a white velvet gown on a fair wearer, with touches of canary velvet, for, though somewhat wintry, it was not unseasonable.

Lady Eva Dugdale believes in blue, which certainly suits her, and Miss Violet Somerset, in white draperies, was one of the well-gowned, as also Miss Fortescue.

I was here confronted by a scientific young man, who confided that he was an expert at the new photography, which not alone encompassed one's thoughts, but entire bodily system. Most alarming! The time-honoured boast, "I can see through her"—or him, as the case may be—has at last, it would seem, become fulfilment. But one's thoughts! How infinitely more disconcerting! To be forced, for instance, to reflect, for fear of discovery, "How charming Mrs. So-and-so looks to-night!" instead of harbouring the comforting conviction that she is an unconsidered and dowdy trifle near your attractive personality—this strain of enforced and purely photographic virtue must surely play deadly havoc with one's nerves. I only hope the discovery will have less popularity than this bold boy seemed to think. He actually offered to demonstrate the present state of my affections if I would only ask him and his camera to tea—which I, needless to add, emphatically refused. By the way, this same fount of information confided to me that knee-breeches and "pink" are coming into fashion for men's "party frocks."

Tuesday and Wednesday in last week were distinguished by an "Irish motion," very brisk, very successful, and, for once, outside the jurisdiction of "the House." St. Patrick's Day and one following were, in fact, appropriately devoted to the advancement of arts and crafts in the sister isle by means of an Exhibition and Sale of Irish Work at Londonderry House, which its noble owners had kindly lent for the occasion. The London branch of the Irish Industries Association was represented by stalls, which lined one side of the fine picture-gallery, and presided over by the hostess, Lady Londonderry; also, among other ladies, the Duchess of Devonshire, the Marchionesses of Salisbury, Zetland, and Downshire; the Countesses of Bective, Cadogan, Donoughmore, Fingall, and Kilmorey; the Ladies Helen Stewart, Betty Balfour, Arthur Hill, Monteagle, O'Neill, Tweedmouth, and many besides. Private stalls occupied another side, several being under the care of ladies on whose estates special industries flourish, as, for instance, the Duchess of Abercorn, foundress of the Baronscourt cottage industry, and the Countess of Mayo, whose beautiful display of embroideries showed what good things are accomplished by the Royal Irish School of Art Needlework. Lady Castleross had on view most attractive examples of furniture and fancy articles made of the oak and arbutus which grow in the lovely valleys around Killarney. Lace, linen, frieze, nothing was unrepresented, if, indeed, one excepts the matchless "Beleek" ware, which is now, unfortunately, a decaying industry in the North. The Duchess of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha arrived on Tuesday with Princess Alexandra, who wore a pretty dove-grey frock, trimmed with cream guipure. Having made a tour of the gallery, the Duchess stayed for a charming little duologue performed by Mr. C. Wyndham and Miss Mary Moore. Lady Helen Stewart and Mr. Charles Colnaghi appeared later in "The Highwayman," which was admirably acted by both distinguished amateurs. Apart altogether from the handsome sum realised by this exhibition, a further good is effected in the stimulus thus given to those budding industries which have in many cases begun under the kindly help of their various organisers.—SYBIL.

LONDON SYMPHONY CONCERTS.

On Thursday evening Mr. Henschel gave, at the St. James's Hall, the tenth and last of his present series of Symphony Concerts. The programme was entirely composed of Beethoven's works, the particular event of the evening being a very fine performance of the "Choral Symphony." It is too seldom that this stupendous work is given before London audiences, and the announcement in the programme sufficed to crowd St. James's Hall to its utmost extent, notwithstanding the attractions of the Philharmonic at the Queen's Hall, where Herr Dvorák was conducting a new concerto written by himself. Mr. Henschel contrived to give us what was, to repeat it briefly, a superb performance. His orchestra played with an enthusiasm and a sense of the continuity of the work which were wholly delightful; the glorious chorus of the final movement, which Bizet in part so impudently transferred to his "Carmen," went with swing and spirit, and Mr. Henschel was quite at his best. Mr. Leonard Borwick took the pianoforte in the great Concerto in E flat with all his accustomed artistic delicacy, and the whole concert was deservedly very successful. This series, let us say in conclusion, has been far and away the best that Mr. Henschel has yet given us.

There is no doubt that the doctors are partly responsible for the enormous increase in the consumption of Scotch whisky, for how many people having, perhaps, a hereditary tendency to gout or rheumatism are ordered to give up ale or port and drink Scotch whisky! This increased demand, and greater perception of quality on the part of consumers, have stimulated the distillers and blenders to give us a better article, and in such brands as "Old Duke," advertised by Mr. Hendrie, of 78, Wellington Street, Glasgow, we get a reliable whisky at a really moderate price.

It is curious to note the ingenuity with which chocolate-manufacturers contrive to present this wholesome and delicious sweetmeat in a tempting variety of forms. Messrs. Cadbury offer us daintily got-up boxes of chocolate-creams with various flavours, a present greatly appreciated by children, and, indeed, by many adults of the softer sex. Their chocolate-almonds, too, are delicious for dessert, as is also their Mexican chocolate ordinarily sold in bars.

CITY NOTES.

The Next Settlement begins on April 13.

THE MEXICAN NATIONAL PLAN.

Hardly a day seems to pass now without the appearance of some reorganisation scheme, and the very latest of them all came out on Saturday—the plan formulated by the Bondholders' Committee of the Mexican National Railroad. There is this good feature about the plan, which makes it stand out from the others, *that the idea is not in this case to fleece anybody*. It is simply an honest attempt to set the house in order for the benefit of all concerned, and there is no nigger on the fence to look for, as is the almost invariable experience in schemes of reconstruction.

The present position of the Mexican National pleases nobody, except, perhaps, the holders of the Six per Cent. Prior Lien bonds, who draw a considerably higher interest than the company can comfortably pay as a fixed charge. It is, therefore, highly desirable to reduce the amount of this Prior Lien (which comes to 11½ million dollars), and it is proposed to sell the Mexican Internal bonds held as collateral by the trustees for the issue, and, with the money realised, to pay off Prior Lien bonds, thereby reducing the amount to 9½ million dollars. A scheme is then to be formulated for the scaling-down of the interest from 6 per cent. to 4½; and, if this conversion can be arranged, the annual saving to the company would be no less than £53,000.

This reduction in the fixed charge would, of course, be an immense relief; but at present it cannot be arrived at, as the company has no power to issue any loan into which the Prior Lien bondholders would be willing to convert. In order that this very desirable economy may be effected, it is proposed to pool the "A" and "B" Second Mortgages, and issue in their stead Ordinary and Preferred Stock, the Preferred going to the "A" bondholders, and the Ordinary to the "B's," a larger nominal amount than their present interests being given to the "A" bondholders in order to make them welcome the exchange. This additional sum represents part of the interest in arrear.

There is little doubt that this conversion into shareholders will be welcomed by the Second Mortgage bondholders, who are at present in a very undesirable position. The "A" bonds are nearly six million dollars in arrear with their interest, and the market in them is so very limited that the price hangs at a level much below what the outlook merits. Under the plan the issue of Preferred Stock would be larger, and therefore more marketable; while the bondholders would be paid half their overdue coupons in Preferred Stock. As the original mortgage would still be retained as security for the Preferred Stock, the bondholders will lose nothing by their conversion, and will probably gain a good deal.

When we turn to the "B" Second Mortgage, we find that the position of the holders will be also improved. At present they have simply a shadow instead of a bond. Their Second Mortgage does not become really effective and make them rank with the "A's" for 21½ years, and, meanwhile, nothing can come to them, as all the arrears of interest on the "A's" (six million dollars already, as we have mentioned) must be satisfied before the "B's" can get a single cent. By the plan, the "B's" would have ahead of them only a Five per Cent. Preferred, and the arrears on the "A's" would have been compromised by a scrip payment. The "B's" have, accordingly, every inducement to come into the arrangement. Taken all round, the scheme reads well.

THE NORTHERN PACIFIC SCHEME.

Yet another lesson has been administered to the British public, and another nail driven into the coffin of the American Railroad Market, by the Northern Pacific scheme of reorganisation. It is one of the most drastic that have yet come out; and we are glad to see that it is so, for the rotten financial condition of the system is so notorious that it would have been sheer folly to make any temporary arrangement that would have only resulted in another collapse a year or two hence. But what we do say is, that the experience of such a disastrous collapse as the plan shows to have taken place, ought to warn John Bull of such a dangerous policy as faith in any Yankee Railroad.

On the miserable Common Stock, which is quoted about 1½, there is actually an assessment of 15 dollars; and if anybody pays this he will be acting like the man who burned a whole box of matches trying to find a single one that he had dropped in the street. The Preferred stockholders really do not get off one whit better. It is true they have to pay an assessment of only 10 dollars; but, then, they are offered very hard terms for exchange into the securities of the new company. Instead of getting 100 dollars of new Preferred, they are to get only 50 dollars Preferred and 50 dollars Common. As the Common is the share standing at 1½, it will be seen how cheerful a conversion this is. In fact, it virtually means wiping out half the interest of the existing Preferred stockholders.

These are very bitter pills to swallow; but, to the general surprise of the market, other people have been found willing to swallow those pills that the stockholders refuse. A syndicate of 45,000,000 dollars has been formed to underwrite the assessments, and accordingly the amounts will be duly provided, whether the stockholders pay up or not; but we cannot help thinking that the syndicate will be very sick of the Northern Pacific before the whole business is over, unless the terms they have received are very favourable indeed, for who will be willing to buy either the Preferred or Common, in view of past experience of their merits? The scheme is brought forward, however, under the best of auspices—Messrs. J. P. Morgan and Co. in New York, Messrs. Drexel

and Co. in Philadelphia, and the Deutsche Bank in Berlin and London. Those names do not suggest that the scheme has been brought out without a very clear understanding of how it would succeed.

The Bond issues of the road are to be consolidated and rearranged, the future charges on the property being a Prior Lien loan of 130,000,000 dollars and a General Lien of 60,000,000 dollars. This is certainly preferable to the miscellaneous dozen of securities that exist at present, and the terms of exchange are by no means unfavourable in the circumstances. The important point is that these new bonds are of long dates—a hundred and a hundred and fifty years—so that the company is saved from the necessity of considering, as at present, the imminence of bonds falling in. The heavy drawings that are at present such a burden on the company are also to be suspended, so as to give the finances relief. The scheme has been very well framed, and is about the best that could have been done in the circumstances.

MR. JOHN HAYS HAMMOND.

What between the coming settlement and the Easter holidays, things both African and Australian have been deadly dull. Our readers know Mr. Hays Hammond by repute as not only a revolutionary leader, but the first gold-expert on the Rand and the Consulting Engineer of



MR. JOHN HAYS HAMMOND.

Photo by Duffus, Johannesburg.

the Consolidated Goldfields. At the moment Mr. Hammond is a most interesting person, for he is an American citizen, and, with the Monroe Doctrine extending in all directions, perhaps even reaching to Africa, not only are they beginning to sing in Washington—

And shall Hays Hammond die, and shall Hays Hammond die?
Then thirty thousand Yankee boys will know the reason why!

but so necessary is he to the gold industry that he has been released on parole and allowed to go off to Johannesburg to look after the deep-levels, on which the future not only of the Consolidated Goldfields, but of President Krüger, depends.

INDUSTRIAL SHARES.

With the price of everything reasonably safe pushed up to famine level, we think our readers who want investments must buy good English industrials before it is too late, for shares which, considering they depend on trade risks for dividends, have hitherto been considered at a proper level if they yield 5½ per cent., will get to a 4 per cent. basis unless a change comes over the scene very shortly.

We may fairly congratulate ourselves on having recommended Bovril shares at 12 not more than three months ago, and finding them at 19 to-day. Of course, the rise is not only on merits, but to a great extent due to reconstruction, rumours of which we have had—under the seal of secrecy—information for some time. In season and out of season we have advised the purchase of Bovril shares, and, as we know, not a few of our readers have followed our advice. It is difficult to tell whether profits should be taken or not, but we intend to sell half our shares, and await further developments with the other half.

A tip reaches us, from a quarter which hardly ever makes a mistake, to buy Armstrong, Mitchell, and Co. ordinary. The stock has been split into £1 shares, the workmen of the firm have been quietly absorbing the shares, Sir Alfred Noble is going to Japan on important business, and the next dividend, it is said, will be at the rate of 15 per cent. The shares may well go to 3 or 3½.

ROSARIO "IMPROVEMENTS."

In the City of Rosario, which is the second city in the Argentine Republic, they have an ingenious way of getting their drainage and other improvements carried out cheaply. The Rosario City Improvement Company was formed in 1888 to acquire a concession in respect of compulsory rates, &c., from the Municipality for the construction of a system of drainage. Up to the end of 1891 the interest on the £450,000 of debentures was paid: since then it has been in default, and Mr. James Anderson, the manager of the River Plate Trust, Loan, and Agency Company, has been appointed Receiver. A very remarkable story as to the conduct of the Municipality in connection with this concession has just been issued by Mr. Anderson as his report for the year 1895.

In July 1891 the default took place, and in the following month a meeting of bondholders was held, at which there was appointed a Committee of Consultation. A year of tedious negotiations resulted in an offer by the Municipality to take over the works, provided that the Drainage Tax were altered from a gold rate on the properties having frontage to the drains to a rate of 3 per cent. on the annual value of properties making use of the sewers. This was rejected by the bondholders at a meeting held in June 1892. The next step was in June 1893, when legal proceedings were instituted against the Municipality, and, as a result, the questions at issue were referred by the Court to arbitrators. That looked like business, but immediately afterwards one of the periodical revolutions broke out, and the business of the Courts was consequently suspended for a long time. Besides that, the position became complicated by a number of practical jokes of the usual Argentine type, when it is desired to escape liability for any obligation. The Receiver went out to negotiate personally with the Municipality, and was getting on nicely, when the Municipality was dismissed by the National Government, and Rosario was left until near the end of 1894. The arbitrator for the company was prevented from fulfilling his duties by a Government engagement, and his functions were, in December 1894, determined by his death.

From July 1891 to March 1895 the company was keeping the drains flushed with water supplied by the Rosario Waterworks Company, for which, of course, it had to pay, while the Municipality was prohibiting the right of exercising the rating powers granted by the concession. Naturally, and properly, the Improvements Company gave notice that it would discontinue this gratuitous service, to which the Municipality rejoined by a series of resolutions, including one that the arbitration be discontinued. Attempts at a friendly settlement proved abortive, and finally the company was peremptorily ordered, under penalty of a fine, to clear a blocked drain and to continue the general flushing of the sewers. Both of these demands the company declined to accede to, and open hostilities ensued. The Municipality took forcible possession of the plant, and, after a lot of cross-litigation, made an arrangement with the Waterworks Company for a supply of water wherewith to utilise the plant the municipal authorities had stolen.

And so the matter rests as a charming specimen of Argentine honesty. The Municipality refuse to take over the works; but they have, without permission, and in defiance of their own edict forbidding the use of the sewers, connected their own public buildings with them. They say the plant is not public property, because they have not taken it over; then they steal part of it, and, because part of the stolen property is broken, they sue the company's officials for wilful damage to public property! But even an Argentine Court could not stand that, and the charge—a criminal one—was dismissed. What a nice city, both from the sanitary and the business point of view, Rosario must be to live in!

MORE MONEY FOR MIDDLESBOROUGH.

Once more the people concerned in Middlesborough (Kentucky) are coming forward with an appeal for money. "The important property known as the South Boston Iron Works is now absolutely owned by this company, and your directors are of opinion that the time has arrived when it should no longer be allowed to remain idle." To start them, the capital required is £30,000, and this the Middlesborough Town and Lands Company shareholders are invited to provide by subscribing for the preference shares in the Middlesborough Engineering Company, Limited.

The prospectus appears to be meant seriously, but it is difficult to read it so. Whatever else there may be about Middlesborough (Kentucky), connection with it appears to encourage extravagant optimism and to deaden the sense of humour. While the circular enclosing the prospectus says that the time has arrived when these works should no longer be allowed to remain idle, the prospectus says nothing definite about the idleness, but states that "the business was originally started and successfully worked for a number of years in Boston, Massachusetts, but was removed to Middlesborough in consequence of its exceptionally favourable position for conducting a large and profitable trade of this description." But the exceptionally favourable position has not hitherto done much to justify the change of *locale*.

The starting of the Watts plant, we are told in the Town and Lands Company's circular, has given new life to the town of Middlesborough, the population having increased by upwards of five hundred persons during the past six months, and a constant supply of pig-iron for manufacturing purposes at Middlesborough is now secured on the spot." All this we are very glad to hear; but still we do not see our way to endorse the statement in the prospectus that "application for shares should be made on the accompanying form, and forwarded to the company's bankers with the amount of the deposit money."

TWO USEFUL BOOKS.

Our readers are always asking us for useful manuals from which they can learn such facts as the capital, property, directorate, and other details of the various mining shares which are from time to time recommended to them, and we take this opportunity of saying that "Kindell's African Mining Manual" and the "Australian Mining Manual" will in most cases fill the place on the book-shelves which is now so often vacant. Both books are chock-full of information, and of handy size and reasonable price. Messrs. Effingham Wilson and Co., of the Royal Exchange, are the publishers.

Saturday, March 21, 1896.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All letters to be addressed to the "City Editor." Our Correspondence Rules are published on the first Wednesday in each month.

KAFFIR.—We have made inquiries, and we advise you not to deal with the broker in question. He is not a member of the Stock Exchange, and has only occupied his present office a comparatively short time.

H. C.—We wrote to you on the 20th inst. We apologise for misreading your signature, and hope the letter reached you.

A. B. C. D.—We really cannot turn this column into a cheap Colonial guide. By private letter we shall be glad to give you reasonable advice as to proceeding to Western Australia, and your chances there, based upon our own Colonial experience, but for this you must comply with Rule 5. We don't like the first company you name, and, as to the second, we know little about it, but it comes from a wrong lot. Sell.

FELIX.—Jobbers cannot do business direct with the public; by the rules of the Stock Exchange they can only deal with members, so that what you want to do is impossible.

AMOS.—We have written to you, and hope you have got our letter.

STANHOPE.—We should prefer Nos. 1 and 2. The first is a good dividend-payer, with a short life.

E. S. W.—We wrote to you on the 18th inst.

GLASGOW.—We believe the shares you mention to be utter rubbish. The mine, if there is one, is in New South Wales, and the idea of diamonds in payable quantities is laughed at by every Colonial who knows the district.

NEMO.—We believe them to be utter rubbish.

H. W. N.—Thank you for the information. The man we meant was a Mulatto, and no doubt the same. He is, of course, a swindler. We cannot read the name and address of the gentleman you call "the prosecutor."

C. H. C.—We are glad we do not hold any of the shares you name. A good deal depends at what price you bought, but we have very little belief in any of them.

SAP.—We answered your letter on the 18th inst., and fancy, from your writing, name, and style, you are a brother of our good correspondent "Amos." Is this so?

DOON.—(1) The concern is too young to form a fair opinion of its merits. Its office is in Glasgow, and we should not be sweet on it; but very little is known of it on the London Stock Exchange. (2) It came from respectable people, but the public did not take the shares, and the underwriters were, we understand, "stuck." As an investment, it may be all right; but we should prefer Humber pref., or Armstrong, Mitchell, and Co.

ALBION.—We do not think the shares you ask about likely to prove a good investment, for the present output cannot be kept up on account of a "creep" in the mine.

NERRAW.—(1) Good. (2) See answer to "Albion." (3 to 14) All fair mining and exploration risks. (15) A market "tip," but we don't believe it has any merits. (16 and 17) We should not expect much from these; we have no belief in their merits. If there is a further decline, average 4, 5, 8, 10, and 14.

READER.—Don't you make the bid for the bonds if you ever expect any interest or principal. The bonds represent the interest on the National Debt in default between 1874 and 1885.

NOVICE.—It is quite a pleasure to get a letter from a correspondent who has the sense to take a profit on something we recommend. The majority of our correspondents buy what we tell them, never sell when they have a good profit, and then complain. (1) We should hold not for the next account, but for three or four months, as the traffics are good, and trade steadily improving. (2) The private accounts we have from the Rand speak very well of all the Randfontein companies. (3) We hear very good accounts of this property, but all West Australian concerns are dull. We think if the Brown Hill return, and a few more which will come in this side of two or three months, are good, we shall see a spurt all along the line. Results alone will do this market good. (4) We think they are a good gamble. (5) At present, yes. It is pretty sure that delays will continue in returns, and various new batteries will give trouble, so we are inclined to expect dull times for a month or two. (6) Honestly, we have no reliable information; if you know anything, act on it. (7) We should hold—we are doing so ourselves—but realise far short of the price you name. (8) We think they are a good speculation, but, until the main line is pushed up to Charterland, you must not expect too much. Very likely Mr. Rhodes' advent will improve matters.

INDUSTRIAL.—Humber pref. or Sweetmeat Automatic ordinary should suit you. For a speculation, Beeson Tyre shares and Raleigh Cycle shares seem to us promising.

T. H.—The debenture stock is a reasonable investment, but, except at rubbish prices, we would not buy the preference or ordinary shares. The 5 per cent. debentures will yield about 3½ per cent. on their nominal value. Do not pay more than 70 per cent. of the face value for them.

ALPHA.—Bartholomay ordinary are among the best American Breweries. We prefer United States, but, as investments to yield high rates of interest, you may buy either with reasonable chances of good results. (1) We cannot read the name you have written, but if you mean Australian Mortgage Land and Finance, it is first-rate, and you may safely buy. (2) Reasonably good, but in both this case and also in No. 1 there is a heavy uncalled liability, which we should not be afraid of, but it must not be forgotten. (3) We don't like it. (4) Good. (5 and 6) We are not sweet on either. Why not buy Standard Bank of South Africa?

RUPERT.—(1) We have great faith in this company, but advise you, under the circumstances, to sell at least half at 25s. (2) We believe both to be swindles, but you must see it out, because you can't sell.

J. R. S.—We wrote to you on the 22nd, and hope the letter has reached you.

A. H.—We have passed on the letter and photograph to the Editor, who will, no doubt, write to you. We cannot very well publish the photo in our financial columns, can we?